

WIRE

THE WIRE ADVENTURES IN MODERN MUSIC

WWW.THEWIRE.CO.UK ISSUE 239 JANUARY 2004 £3.50



Arthur Russell
Jerome Noetinger
Paal Nilssen-Love
Matt Rogalsky

Damon & Naomi
Basil Kirchin
Matthew Bourne

2003 Rewind

Records of the Year plus writers' and musicians' pros and cons

David Sylvian
Henry Flynt
Kazuki Tomokawa

Nurse With Wound
Four Tet
Chris Watson
Ari Onda

Start 2004 with some of the best music around. All for under £10



Shadow Huntaz
Corrupt Data

Scam

£9.99

Shadow Huntaz fuse a hip hop aesthetic to the abstraction of total electronics. Recently they have gotten together with Dutch soul males Fundamens to tease out some truly progressive hip hop that we are sure will catapult them into the upper echelons.



Kerrier District
Kerrier District

Reprise

£7.99

Luke Vibert's invisible take on disco is stripped down like early house, organic sounding but with a lush glowing contemporary electronic feel, all groovy handclaps, strings, cowbells, horns and oniric basslines, highly addictive and fresh.

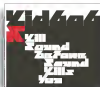


Various Artists
Rock Action presents Vol.1

Rock Action

£5.00

Sampler CD from Rock Action featuring exclusive tracks from James On Complex, Pert Gimp and label-owners Mogel along with highlights from a selection of the label's back catalogue from the likes of Envy and Papa M.



Kid606
Kill Sound Before Sound Kills

You

£9.99

Third proper album from one of the most respected figures in modern electronic music. Specific Recordings first ever enhanced CD, showcasing the dark animation on 'The Stress' video.



Growing
The Sky's Run Into The Sea

Kinsky Records

£9.99

Potential underground album of the month is Maja. "Alternating between doleful ambience, ominous electronic ambience and tentatively turgid, but quaking newness, 'The Sky's Run' shows what can be achieved with two guitars, a bass and plenty volume. Slow, real slow."



Monolake
Momentum

Imbalance

£9.99

A sequence of 8 pieces exposing a darker, straight, rhythmic and technical side of Monolake. S/S review in Mojo "Like a melting ice-cup under a rapidly deflating sky. Beautiful in a sinister sort of way."



Various Artists
Hospital Mix 3

NHS

£5.00

No Tune rolls out a full hour of D&B anthems and exclusive dubz from kings of soulful Jungle Hospital. Eight of the 10 tracks here are exclusives, and the best part is it's only a live!.



Entrance
Careless Love

Sketchbook

£5.00

21 Year old, 1st-time troubadour Entrance has already caused quite a stir in the US, having toured with Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Bonnie Prince Billy, Devendra Banhart and Cat Power. 'Careless Love' is his debut European release.

available at

amazon.co.uk
and you're done.™

all titles distributed by:



Price does not include P&P. Offer subject to availability. Information correct at time of going to press – please see Web site for more details.

Inside



Regulars

Editor's Idea 4

Letters 6

Bitstream 8

Top little tattle from *The Wire* news ticker

Global Ear 14

Bibi Korf finds Akio Suzuki's space in the sun in Tango before wintering in Sapporo, Japan

Charts 50

Out There 92

The peck of the month's festivals, concerts, club spaces and more

Directory 96

Plus Label Lore and Savage Pencil

Subscribe 98

Back Issues 100

Epiphanies 106

An industrial culture hand-me-down Martin Doney LP turns Ken Hollings onto ecotopia

Reviews

Index 51

Soundcheck 52

This month's record reviews

Print Run 76

New music books digested

Cross Platform 78

Edwin Pouncey enters the Spook House with film maker Cameron Jamie; plus multimedia, reviews and Terre Thaemlitz's Inner Sleeve

On Location 82

Live reviews including The Stooges at ATP, Merle B in Berlin, Sounding Beijing, New Music in Huddersfield and more

Paal Nilssen-Love 20

Norway's finest utility drummer is at home with Scorch Trio's improv and The Thing's garage rock. By Mike Barnes

Jerome Noetinger 22

Metamkine and Quintet Avant's nose agitator tells Dan Warburton about his desire to keep musique concrète alive

Basil Kirchin 26

Alan Licht talks to the neglected composer of *Dr Phibes* scores about his pioneering eco-Ambient free jazz work

Arthur Russell 30

David Toop unravels the enigma of the NYC Buddhist cellist who created the 80s' most seductive dance tracks

2003 Rewind 38

The Wire's crack writing squad select the year's best records; plus critics' singers' and players' pros and cons

Invisible Jukebox 16

Damon & Naomi

The US acid folk duo try to identify music by Yoiko Ono, Robert Wyatt, Dredd Foole and more. Tested by Alan Licht

Bites

Matthew Bourne 10

Matt Rogalsky 12

Subscriber special

For details of how to subscribe to *The Wire*, turn to page 98 of this month's issue or go to www.thewire.co.uk



With this month's issue of *The Wire* all subscribers will receive a free copy of a new CD from Italy's Netmage festival

The fourth edition of Italy's Netmage festival, which takes place in Bologna between 21-24 January, is subtitled, "Creative and Innovative Images in Art, Media, Communication". According to the organisers, the festival, which includes performances, workshops and conferences, is designed to function as an "international meeting point dedicated to Live Media". To coincide with this year's event, the organisers have produced a special CD featuring tracks by artists appearing at the festival, including Kim Cascone, Thomas Klöner & Armin Tietz, Rechenzentrum, Scanner, [The User], Richard Chartier, Radian and more. The CD is given away to all *The Wire*'s subscribers with copies of this month's issue. For more information on Netmage 04 go to www.netmage.it



With the March issue of *The Wire* all subscribers will receive a free copy of *A Snapshot From The 2004 Domino Ten-Day*

In recent years, Brussels's annual ten day Domino festival has established itself as a major entry in Europe's alt music calendar. For the past two years the event's organisers, the Ancienne Belgique organisation, have produced special CDs featuring tracks by musicians appearing at the festival and which have been given away to all *The Wire*'s subscribers. This year is no different, and with the forthcoming March issue all the magazine's subscribers will receive a free CD containing highlights from the line-up for this year's event, which runs between 30 March and 8 April. Details of that track listing will appear in next month's February issue. In the meantime, go to www.abconcerts.be for more information on the Domino festival itself

Netmage 04 and *A Snapshot From The 2004 Domino Ten-Day* are the latest instalments in an ongoing series of CDs which are specially produced for *The Wire* and given away to all the magazine's subscribers worldwide with selected issues of the zine. These CDs are only available to subscribers, and are not on sale with the magazine in the shops. If you are not yet a subscriber you can still get your hands on both CDs by taking out a new subscription to *The Wire* this month. Just turn to page 98 or go to www.thewire.co.uk

"The most essential music magazine of the contemporary era" – Forced Exposure

Letters

Write to: Letters, *The Wire*, 2nd Floor East, 88-94 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA, UK
Fax +44 (0)20 7422 5011, email letters@thewire.co.uk
Letters should include a full name and address

Agenda bender

John Traynor (Letters, *The Wire* 238) claims that my putting the word "birthright" between scare quotes "makes... clear the agenda of the reviewer": to wit, that I do not share the late Bryn Jones's sympathy for the cause of the Palestinian people; and that, further (oh, so much further!) I thereby belittle ALD political protest(s), whether individually or collectively expressed.

I have no idea of the confused Mr Traynor's own agenda, but agenda he must harbour, unless he is just a dimwit. I personally believe that only a very dishonest man could take my original phrase – "the terrible dispossession 'birthright' of the Palestinians" – reduce it to that one word, and draw the conclusion he does.

I welcome readers' challenges regarding my often lazy aesthetic judgments – but don't you DARE impute political bad faith, especially through such unscrupulous means. (And you accuse me of "tactics" used by Alistair Campbell?)

As far as Jones/Muslimgaze goes. I nowhere "attack his views" (which – do I need to say this? – I share); at most I suggest that a little less Muslimgaze, or a bit more quality control from his Estate, might do more to register those views in a world already inundated with CDs of every stripe, never mind a Muslimgaze release which even his biggest fan would have to admit is daunting.

I do not see how speculating that there may (also) have been personal sadesses in Jones's life "is to devalue and dismiss (his) political views" – unless you equate political commitment with being an unfeeling, inflexible robot. Everyone loses when we begin to construct zealotry for compassion – and, as I think Mr Traynor's letter proves, one of the first casualties is the truth.

Ian Penman London, UK

Ugly rumors

As a footnote to Gary Lachman's excellent piece on Luigi Russolo (*The Wire* 238), the census may like to know that his brother Antonio Russolo's 1923 recordings were included in an issue of the cassette magazine Audio Arts entitled *Improvvised Music And Sound Works*. It's fairly straightforward salon music overlaid with the scrapes and rumbles of the instruments, the latter often occurring when conventional orchestration would suggest some sort of punctuation from the percussion section, such as a timp roll or cymbal clash. This rather half-hearted approach on the part of the composer perhaps explains his brother's disappointment.

My copy of the cassette dates from 1983 when it was first issued, but it may in fact still be available. Enquire via the email address given at www.audioarts.co.uk.

Doger Thomas Amersham, UK

Rim view

There is a large part of Jim Haynes's review of my CD *Light Forms* in issue 237 that makes me want to give him a tag – how could an artist find fault with a review that says "clearly his best work", and "finally it's a breathtaking and beautiful work". Jim, I wish everyone had your ears! On the other hand, when someone says "it's a shame that Roden lacks the convictions to stand behind his cosmic allegories" and that I have had to "retreat into modernist views of sound being about nothing more than itself", I feel I have no choice but to respond.

The text Haynes is referring to in both cases was found on my Website and not included in the CD. It is somewhat unfortunate for me, to have a writer be critical of a work through a text that was intentionally not included with it. The text which Haynes mentions accompanied the original installation which included the sound – PLUS a film/video, and multiple speaker installation in an archive (setting up a different experience than hearing a CD at home).

In the installation text, I do not backpedal, nor do I speak about sound for sound's sake – I state that the work came out of a series of inspirations, events and collisions; and after laying out these things, I conclude that the work was formed through them (and indeed deeply connected to them); but it is NOT ABOUT them (ie it is not only or mainly a descriptive or narrative presence that describes or defines the things I was interested in when I made it).

In trying to get away from the idea that this piece is a description of the intuitive path of its making, I am not saying that it is only sound ABOUT sound; my work is not about sound – it IS sound – sound is used as a substance for making art. After the sound leaves my hands, it can be experienced by others, and what that experience means is up to the listener to discover through their own very private act of listening.

This is not a way for me to soften my convictions – for at the heart of my convictions is the belief in the value of the creation of artworks that do not tell people what to hear or what to think. I want the work to be like giving people wood, nails, drywall and tools and letting them build their own houses.

In the review, Haynes asks why, if this is the case, I include the texts at all. I want to reveal things for people so the question of what is making the sounds is

clear – and I also want to let people know a bit about why those sounds were used in the first place, as they are very important to me. Just because I am committed to the integrity of my sources and inspirations doesn't mean, again, that I want them to speak of a singular meaning in terms of the first listener's experience.

I want the experience for listeners to be open – so that someone like Haynes can use words like "softly sculpted", "dirt", and "amorphous" – even though these words have nothing to do with my own "fascist luge" of connecting light bulbs to Jasper Snowden. Having the work evoke such things in someone else's mind is exactly what I am looking for. After all, the text that DOES accompany the CD says, "In this version, the sound stands alone – light bulbs masquerading as the presence of bells" – it would seem from Haynes's praise of the work that perhaps the extracurricular research wasn't quite so necessary.

Steve Roden Pasadena, USA

Nurse with injury

Just thought I would drop you a note concerning a few inaccurate details in *The Wire* 238. First off, in Keith Mould's review of Nurse With Wound's *Chance Meeting Of A Defective Tape Machine* And *Marginal*, he states that previous attempts to remix NWW material by Stereolab or Jim Thirlwell have not been too successful. I would just like to say that Stereolab or Thirlwell have never mixed or remixed any of my music. Apart from myself, the only person that I'm aware of is Colin Potter, and what he did was wonderful.

I enjoyed the Peaches Invisible Jukebox, but the Nina Simone song listed as "For Women" from where Peaches took her name is in fact "Four Women". A seemingly small detail, but an incredibly important one, as it's the passionate story of four generations of black American slave women, and a staggering piece of raw emotion to boot!

Also, the Diddy Group Names chart was fun, but I thought that the American band Crawling With Tarts was doddier enough to deserve a mention. But my personal favourite must be Joan Of Arse. By the way, many years ago in *Record Mirror*, Nurse With Wound nearly topped a similar chart only to be beaten by Fragments Of Mountbatten – pure class!

Steven Stapleton Colchester, Ireland

Corrections

Issue 238 Alison Mitchell, not Reiko Kudo, played trumpet on Melior Shaiel Hash Bar's *Blues Du Jour*, as stated in Soundcheck. In On Location, the photos of Rome's *Dissonance* festival should have been credited to Lia Chesnokov. □

The Wire 240: on sale from 22 January

www.thewire.co.uk

We'll email official Web presence, featuring list of press articles, news, wires, database, mailing list and more

The Wire discussion group

Useful, online forum devoted to the kind of music and culture covered in *The Wire* groups www.wire.com/group/thewire

The Wire on Resonance 104.4 FM

A weekly show of new music hosted by *The Wire* staff. Broadcasting across London on 104.4 FM every Thursday 9-11 PM GMT, with simultaneous streaming at www.resonancefm.co.uk

JAGJAGUWAR

WORD OF MOUTH:
WE DEPEND ON IT.

WWW.JAGJAGUWAR.COM



MANISHEVITZ City CD

A bunch of introverts trying their hardest to make extroverted music (and failing). Sleazebagging, grunting and moaning through each tune, they have created a pop record that will endure.



ASPERA Oh Fontanka CD/EP

The mind-expansive full-length that sounds like nothing else. Epic '80s pop production waxes side by side with hip-hop's old school and new school, and with electronic music's experimentalists as well as its early trailblazers.



OIKERVIK RIVER Down The River Of Golden Dreams CD/EP

Oikervik River's new full-length record oozes their signature string-densifying attack and umbilical chamber-pop swoon, but it also evokes the veracious cabaret of Jacques Brel, the off-kilter swagger of Bob Dylan's *Blonde On Blonde*, and the dusky balladry of Nick Cave.



SPOKANE Measurement CD

Spokane is not for people who want to belong to something. Exploring spenser terrain occupied by long, empty spaces and tenuous ambiances.

Also available: RYEV "Down the Puppet String, Marionettes" CD/EP, ONEIDA "Back One Teach One" 2x/CD, RICHARD YOUNGS "Aur of the Bar" CD and NAGASANI TE releases.

CDs \$12, 2x/CDs \$14, US \$10, CD/EP \$7 • 1021 South Walnut, Bloomington, IN 47401 USA
Add \$1.00 for airmail • Distributed by Secretly Canadian Distribution



SECRETLY CANADIAN

PRESENTS: JUNE PANIC / THE IMPOSSIBLE SHAPES / JORMA WHITTAKER
DAMIEN JURADO / SONGS: CHIA / DUBREIN: CR-512 LP \$10 ALLMUSIC: 25

1021 SOUTH WALNUT, BLOOMINGTON, IN 47401 WWW.SECRETLYCANADIAN.COM 1816/02/04/SECRETLYCANADIAN.COM

Le

CAN ADJUST

Conjugation (Word of Mouth) Bkac

Pr

LOREN CONNORS

The Murder of Jimmy Arc

Nd

IRVIN LANEY

Hard (Fire County) Bkac Bkac

Pm

LAURIE SPIGEL

Harmless (Munich)

Sm

RAFAEL TARRAL

National Series 0

Eu

ARNOLD GREYBLATT

Paint (Surreal) Bkac

Gd

MINA KRYLYV

Silver (Surreal) and Silver (Munich)

Th

BOYS CHATHAM

Three Aspects (The Name)

Oy

LEAF OF LIGHT

Released LEE RANA/ART and ALAN LIGHT

Ho

RAJIB KHATAR

Released: BOMKARA ESE and POCOTI GOWSTI

Er

MATS GUSTAFSSON

Staged (Surreal) and Staged (Surreal)

Tm

PAMINE LAVERNA

A Little Noise in the System

Yb

LAMONNA SMITH

Rare (Surreal)

Lu

KEENA PARRINS

devot (Surreal)

THE SECRETLY CANADIAN

WWW.TABLETOPFREEDOM.COM

Bitstream

News and more from under the radar.
Compiled by The Trawler

Sound art thinking: Tom Greenwood



Just enough time left in 2003 to mention that in December, *Adventures in Modern Music*, **The Wire's** weekly slot on Resonance 104.4FM, will present *The Other Festive 50*, a chart rundown of the magazine's 50 Records of the Year (see page 38). The rundown will be spread across three weeks, with the shows being broadcast between 9-30.11pm GMT on 18 December, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, and repeated between 7-8.30am GMT each following Wednesday. The shows will also be archived as downloadable MP3s on The Wire Website a few days after their broadcast dates: go to www.thewire.co.uk then click Web Exclusives, then On Air. Meanwhile, the **Borderline** show on Germany's Freies Radio Kasel 105.8FM will be broadcasting its own chart rundown of our 50 Records of the Year (as it has done since 1998) this month. The sequence of five shows will go out every Friday in January, starting on 2 January, between 8-9pm CET. Real audio files of the shows will be available at www.borderline-extra.de for three days after transmission and will then be archived for 15 weeks thereafter >>> **The Pauline Oliveros Foundation** is currently in the process of making back issues of the legendary *EAR* magazine available for sale once again. It was originally published between 1975 and 1991, and according to the Foundation's Website, "contains the history of experimental music in New York". More information at www.deeplistening.org/dlc/ >>> Overseen by Tom Greenwood (Jackie-O Motherclutch) and Jon Stevenson (East Ecotic Archive), **Unity Sound Archive** has, since 2000, been providing a wide variety of events of international sound art. They are currently planning a month long residency in Glasgow in June 2004, which will take the form of a collaboration with various sound, video and performance artists from the UK, North America and Europe. The residency will include four large-scale performances – one per week – in locations in and around the city. The events will be formatted as continuous, four-hour long improvisations with overlapping performances by different groups of musicians. There will also be smaller installations in various other locations throughout Glasgow. All performances will be documented and made available as part of the Unity Sound Archive. For more details

go to www.usoundarchive.com, which is where you can also find information on *Repeat After Me* Mud, Mud, a new collection of drawings, cartoons and collages by **Dylan Nyoukis** (of Pnck Decay and Decor Pinga infamy) and the first item to be issued by Greenwood's Rain Ridge Publishing Company (print) >>> Will the controversy never die down? On 16 January the first ever UK national broadcast of John Cage's infamous 4'33" will be performed by a full strength BBC Symphony Orchestra – numbering more than one hundred players – as the closing piece of the opening concert of the **Uncaged** festival at the Barbican Centre, London, which runs between 16-18 January. Events and performances take place at other venues in the capital (see Out There). The whole concert is broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Four TV. For full festival listings go to [>>> FUSELEEDS04](http://www.bbc.co.uk/orchestras/so/barbican/Jan.shtml) is a new biennial festival that will take place in venues across Leeds, with the inaugural event happening between 3-7 March. The wide range of music of featured performers will include Dhafer Youssef, Bill Fissell, Mondrian Quartet and Yo La Tengo. Specially commissioned new works will be premiered at the festival, including pieces by Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, Markus Stockhausen and Django Bates. American sound artist Bill Fontana has also been invited to construct a sonic sculpture outside Leeds Art Gallery. Full information on concerts and events can be found at [>>> As reported in this column in The Wire 236, **Damo Suzuki** has embarked on a worldwide Network Never Ending Tour \(although strictly speaking it does actually end, this November\). The former Can singer was so fired up by recent shows in Italy and the UK, he was inspired to write: "I tell you.....it was really f.a.n.t.a.s.t.i.c. I came back home with much happiness and motivation for future project. Hey, we can get all these positive energy together and walk to front, step by step for better world. This is reason I start NEVER ENDING TOUR. It will be start in January 2004, 2 months earlier than I planned. I would like to see you and would like to make smile on your face everywhere in the world!" For more news go to \[>>> Warp\]\(http://www.damosuzuki.de\) is about to make its](http://www.fuseleeds.org.uk)

entire back catalogue and all new releases available online as high quality, pay per track MP3 downloads, bleep.com will be the official Warp MP3 outlet and aims to be the quickest and easiest method of downloading the label's music from the Net. Unlike peer to peer file sharing or iTunes, bleep.com does not require users to install proprietary software to access its downloads >>> **WMO**, the label dedicated to releasing Wire-related archive recordings ceased trading at the end of 2003. The label is having a big clearout of all its stock, which also includes Wire solo projects at discount prices. For more info email [>>> Warehouse No 20](mailto:wmouk@yahoo.com) is a vast, disused gran warehouse in the port area of Nagoya, Japan that in recent years has been home to a number of the city's most adventurous organisations and events, such as Deep Acoustics and the Lethe Voice Festival. Though entrepreneurs were given to understand the warehouse would be available until 2010, Nagoya's city authorities have since decided to close it within the year, apparently concerned that the building is in danger of collapsing, effectively making its experimental occupants homeless. Negotiations for a new space are currently underway. Send emails of support via these websites: www.artport.city.nagoya.jp/index2.html and [>>> All Tomorrow's Parties founder Barry Hogan has confirmed that the alternative music festival will return to California in 2004. The West Coast date hit problems earlier this year when Los Angeles' University of California, hosts of the 2002 event, pulled out, precipitating the cancellation of the festival. But, supported by Southern California promoter Goldenwoud, the event was eventually staged last November aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach \(see On Location\). The 2004 event will take place at the same location on 6 and 7 November. Meanwhile, its UK version takes place over two weekends in March and April at the Camber Sands holiday centre \(see Out There\). There is no confirmation yet on the much mooted New York edition. Check for updates at \[>>>\]\(http://www.warpgfestival.com\)](http://www.lethevoice.com)



Money Will Ruin Everything

2 Compact discs with 30 exclusive tracks by
Supersilent, Biosphere, Jaga Jazzist, Food, Deathprod,
Arve Henriksen, Alog, Phonopani, Nils Økland, Information, and many more
in a 96 page book designed by Kim Hørtthoy
celebrating 5 years of records on Rune Grammofon.

Out now.

RCD 2032
Rune Grammofon
Money Will Ruin Everything

sales and distribution
UK: www.newnote.com
US: www.foreverdiscovery.com
rest of world: www.concretecity.com

or go to directly to
www.runegrammofon.com

UPCOMING RELEASES 2004

RCD 2033: **Supersilent**
Falsk
RCD 2034: **Sessanna and the Magical Orchestra**
List of Lights and Buns
RCD 2035: **Deathprod**
Morals and Dogma
RCD 2036: **Deathprod**
Deathprod (ACO Box)

MATTHEW BOURNE

Many travelled Rhodes. By Brian Morton



Matthew Bourne (second left) with the members of Dr M: Chris Sharkey, Dave Black, Sam Hobbs and Ryan Voevod

The first thing Matthew Bourne wants to make clear is that his group Dr M – plugged in or otherwise – isn't one guy but three. "I know my name's the one that's been heightened," he sighs, "and that's because of the Perner and BBC things, but this is very much a group effort." The group's debut album, the modestly titled *The Electric Dr M Parts I/II*, does indeed go out under Matthew Bourne's name but, as you'll hear, the circumstances of its recording suggest that his modesty isn't merely pro forma.

The keyboard man has been garnering attention for some time already. The BBC and Perner "things" were an *Innovator of the Year* award in 2002 and a straight win in the musician category respectively. The buzz surrounding the new album pushes him into a whole new dimension. Ordinarily, that would please anyone, but Bourne is anxious to correct a few misconceptions.

There's no argument about the basic facts. He started off on trombone, switched to cello and then found himself doing piano duets with his cello teacher. Leeds College of Music opened up all sorts of possibilities, but it was the acquisition of a Fender Rhodes in 1996 that really changed the rules of the game. Over the last five years, Bourne has been giving solo concerts, playing in his own high energy trio with Dave Kane and Steve Davis, and with another three-handed outfit called *The Distortion Trio*, which pushes the envelope even further. When I call him, he's just about to set off for Poland for a couple of dates with them.

One of the unexpected sides of the two gigs is that the guys are just as likely to start off singing as pitch into an onstage argument. That element of theatre – "though not continued theatre", he insists – is very much part of the total Bourne package. The other

elements are equally unexpected. Ask him, as you find yourself doing on these occasions, what his influences are and the notes read back a little strangely: Dave Brubeck, Bill Evans, "these days a lot of John Zorn", Blossom Dearie, Sarah Vaughan, Debussy, Ligeti, Morton Feldman, Michael Finnissey and Salvatore Sciurino. A spoken word/theatre connection suggests Cecil Taylor as an obvious source for a keyboard man, but apparently not. Burt Phillips, on the other hand... "Long past time ECM did something about reissuing *Call Me When You Get There*," he declares, "I think that might be my favourite record."

He's pleased with the reception *The Electric Dr M* has been getting but not entirely mollified. The music is a swirling collage of keyboards, guitar, bass and two drum kits, with assorted electronics and samplers thrown into the mix. For a start, he clarifies, it's not just a Matt Bourne project. "The band name, originally just Dr M, came from our initials, Dave [Black, one of the drummers], Ryan [Voevod, bassist] and Matthew, and it's always been that way. This new album was recorded in an unusual way. I was sick when we were supposed to do some stuff, so Sam and Dave" – not the soul duo, but drummers Sam Hobbs and Dave Black – "went into the studio and laid down lots of stuff on tape. After that Ryan and [guitarist] Chris [Sharkey] came in and played live over the top of that, no preparation, just listening and playing. And it was only then that I came along and added my stuff. So I only really came in on the end of it."

It's pretty clear, though, that it's Bourne who stamps his eclectic musical personality all over the record. The reason he's not entirely happy even with the positive reviews is that he's being likened to things that aren't

part of his musical purview. "Yeah, they all mention Miles Davis and Herbie Hancock's *Mwandishi* period," he groans. "I happen to love *Sextant* and I think it's a really underrated record, but none of that stuff was in the forefront of my mind when we were doing *The Electric Dr M*. I have some of those records, but some of the other guys haven't even heard them, so that isn't what it's about. It would be more accurate to say that I've been influenced by the masters of Fender Rhodes pianos and Korg synthesizers."

You have to feel sympathy for anyone who jumped to those conclusions. The swirl of guitar, electric keyboard and double percussion inevitably calls up 70s fusion, and the tape collage method is bound to remind you of Miles Davis and Teo Macero. Listen a bit harder, though, and it's clear that Matthew Bourne and his colleagues are plugged into a more contemporary vocabulary, not to mention bigger and more ambitious structures. His fondness for Michael Finnissey makes sense of the album's almost covert and subliminal structure, which only becomes evident on subsequent hearings, but immediately clinches its curious power. Translate some of these sounds into more canonical instruments and it might well be the work of a dot-dotted postmodernist. The beauty of Bourne's concept is that its originality is plugged into as many traditions as you care to throw back his way, anything from Debussy's impressionism to Miles's, rock energy to high abstraction. He departs for Poland in the morning, conscious that there aren't that many gigs in the diary for the next little while. He's not that bothered, and you can see why. There's enough going on in Matt Bourne's hand to keep him busy for a decade or more. □ *The Electric Dr M Parts I/II* is released on Sound Recordings

MATT ROGALSKY

Silent resistance. By Julian Cowley



Matt Rogalsky (right) with sound artist Justin Bennett

Whether it's in performance or installations, Matt Rogalsky's sound art gravitates toward overlooked, incidental or discarded information streams. For his *S* project in 2001, he harvested silences from BBC radio broadcasts on a single day – presenters' pauses for breath, tiny hesitations, spaces between announcements and programmes – and compiled them onto 24 CDs. *dis(tribution)*, a single CD edition available direct from Rogalsky, collects that day's "most silent silences". "I've always been interested in sound," he says. "I like peering things down, taking raw data as found object and manipulating it, trying to find what's usually not heard or seen, but which is just as rich as whatever message was being conveyed by the intended content."

Rogalsky looks back on the *S* project as "a kind of sonic plundering, presenting broadcasters with a dilemma. Their copyright undoubtedly extends to the 'gaps between the words' and yet 'silence' – dead air – is one thing they want to eliminate, or minimise. The BBC came to know about the project and decided not to pursue legal action. Of course the silences aren't silent, they're full of small sounds. And in the case of radio dramas, I get all the 'scenery' with none of the actors. Turning around the figure and none relationship appears to me a good way of taking some control of things."

In Germany recently, Rogalsky's friend Jens Brand has made an installation using exhalations edited from pop songs, and Rogalsky has noticed the appearance of an organisation called Language Removal Services, based in Hollywood, doing a similar thing with archival recordings. He has himself been using his "silence sampling" software in installations and in performance with other improvising musicians. "I grab their 'spaces between the notes' as raw material," he explains. "Recently I applied the 'silence sampler' to remove George W Bush's voice from his speech of 14 March 2003, delivering his ultimatum to Saddam Hussein. I didn't want to hear his sanctimonious shit ever again,

and the thought that I was sitting in Ontario taking out the President with a silence made me laugh. What I had left after running Bush through the software a few times was pretty eerie – just the rawest bits of his voice echoing in the White House, which a number of people have commented sound like war drums."

Rogalsky's education as a composer began early. He recalls, "My mother found an 'experimental music' kindergarten for me in Ottawa, run by a Canadian music educator named Barbara Case-Beggs. She taught standard Western notation but encouraged sound experimentation." From 1985 to 1991 he studied composition formally in Vancouver with Martin Bartlett, whose own teachers included John Cage, Pauline Oliveros and North Indian classical singer Pandit Pran Nath. Bartlett was a pioneer of "interactive" music for microcomputers, "software which listened to one or more performers and made decisions about what sounds to make in response". His emphasis fell, Rogalsky notes, on "the axis of live [performance]".

Rogalsky also studied with composer Barry Truax, who was "firmly in the 'studio electroacoustic' camp and a very good instructor in acoustics, psychoacoustics and various nuts and bolts technical things to do with synthesizing sound. This sensitised my hearing and I got the experience of working in a real to real studio, making 'tape' pieces the old fashioned way with hundreds of splices. That was valuable." Moving across the border to Wesleyan University, Connecticut, he encountered electronics composers Alvin Lucier and Ron Kuivila, as well as composer and improviser Anthony Braxton.

In 1994 Rogalsky was writing a paper about the musical culture of Merce Cunningham's Dance Company and Kuivila introduced him to David Tudor, a close musical associate of the Company since its inception in 1953. "I was able to interview Tudor several times and hang out with him," he remembers. "He was dealing with the effects of several strokes.

Most of my interview recordings are silences, waiting for him to respond." In 1995 and 1996, as Tudor's health deteriorated, Rogalsky worked for him, "cataloguing and photographing his electronic boxes. After his death, Ron Kuivila and I arranged to have them given to the Wesleyan University World Instrument Collection, a 'working archive' – you can go there, get them out and plug them in."

Currently, Rogalsky is completing a PhD thesis on the evolution of Tudor's *Rainforest*. For his own piece *Tudor Loops*, at once a study of and homage to Tudor's practice of working with feedback loops, Rogalsky developed an instrument that enabled him to mix in improvisation with sampled fragments of previous performances. An excerpt appears on *Feedback*, issued with *Resonance* magazine (Volume 9 No 2). Another excerpt from a separate realisation at Het Apollohuis in the Dutch town of Eindhoven surfaces on *Apollo And Mayaya* (Apollo).

"I identify less and less with the world of 'composition' and feel much more aligned with the realm of art in general," Rogalsky confides, despite his extensive compositional training. "There's more sustenance there for me in terms of ideas and possibilities. I really think of sound as just another plastic medium and feel more like a sculptor or architect."

An ongoing collaboration with visual artist Chloe Steele, *Perfect Imperfect*, has involved exhibitions using video projections, wall drawings, sculpture and sound works that raise issues of empire as embodied in an English country house. "It's a bit of parts now, that we can assemble in different ways depending on the exhibition venue," Rogalsky concludes. "The Cage-Cunningham way of working, completely independently but with confidence that the independent parts will work together synergistically when they are brought together, allows maximum freedom, greatest efficiency, and the magic of accident." □ For information on all Matt Rogalsky's recordings and art projects, go to his homepage: mrogalsky.net



Badawi
Clones & False
Prophets



Sulcidie
Hott Alive



James Chance
White Cannibal



Bad Brains
S/T



MCS
Robes In Arms



Skatalites
Stretching Out



Television
The Blow Up



Bill Laswell
Rior Dub Sessions



Badawi
Bedouin Soundclash



Glenn Branca
Symphony #1



Martin Rev
S/T



Jazzy Butcher
Conspiracy
Glorious & Idiomatic

ROIR

Say ROAR!

PO Box 501, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012

(212) 477-0563

Email: info@roir-usa.com • Website: www.roir-usa.com

Distributed in the UK by Shellshock: www.shellshock.co.uk

reRUSA

5 NEW RELEASES

ART BEARS / 6 CD "ART BOM" SET

"This is some of the best music, and one of the best bands, to come out of the 70's." *Ground and Sky*

VRIL / EPYRNIS IN CORN

The first installment by Chris Cutler (Coastal, Art Bears, Henry Cow), Bob Drake (Yawning Pigeon, Jazzy, Holly and Lotus Simoes (Art Kismet, Bull Schickel)

THE SCIENCE GROUP / SPOORS

"A mesmerizing kaleidoscope of avant-garde rock music, without being too inaccessible. A classic." *Deceit*

ABSOLUTE ZERO / CRASHING SCARS

"A triumph of brain-blasting and spirit." *Perfect Sound Forever*

LUTZ GLANDIEN / LOST IN ROOMS

"Glandien is able to reflect sonic complexity and subtlety into music without diverting it of its essential power." *The BBC*

* Review comments refer to previous CD's.

Also on our latest releases recordings by Faust, Henry Cow, AMB, Fred THOM, C&H, The Necks, Marcel Mercante, James Durrant, Jay Ross, Tim Hodgkins, Peter Dinklage, Coalesce, Yawning Pigeon, Jazzy, etc.

reR USA
Opens its Doors
Jan 1st, 2004



art for your ears www.refusa.com

Ref USA / 303 E. Broadway #386, Denver, CO 80209 / 720.670.8057

resonant



Graham Hinton
Silence Like a Gift



Resonant
The Edge of the World



Resonant
The Edge of the World



Resonant
The Edge of the World



Resonant
The Edge of the World



Resonant
The Edge of the World

resonant

WWW.RESONANTUSA.COM
VICTORY: WWW.RESONANTUSA.COM

DESIGNED BY R&D / SCARF / LA BALLE / FORDS EXPRESSION / BARKER / HANDEL

GLOBAL EAR: TANGOSAPORO

A survey of sounds from around the planet.

This month: Biba Korf seeks a place in the sun with
Hokkaido winter kicks in



Left: Aiko Suzuki contemplates his Space In The Sun. Right: Sapporo nights with Ikuro Takahashi

Everyone dreams of a space in the sun. Sound artist Aiko Suzuki made his dream get up and dance on a mountainside in Tango, a remote coastal region of Kyoto prefecture. Tango has always been a significant, even holy region for Suzuki, not just because he lives there when international sound art commissions permit, as for much of the past 12 months he has been fulfilling engagements in Europe. More significantly, the Tango peninsula is also one of the nearest ports of call to Korea.

Suzuki was born in what is now the North Korean capital Pyongyang in 1941 when it was still occupied by the Japanese. During a three hour train trip from Osaka, he recalls vague childhood memories of forlorn Japanese families disembarking on the peninsula after being expelled from Korea. The night before, Suzuki had performed amid a copious of his self-made metal percussion/wind instrument cum sculptures, called the Analapaks, at his retrospective Analaposphere exhibition at Sound Art Lab, a redemanded redneck warehouse space in Osaka's docklands. When he heard that photographer Koiko Yoshida and I planned to attend, he invited us to enter his dream Space In The Sun. A Space In The Sun, the way Suzuki conceived and built it back in 1988, is an optimum space for listening to nature. "Ako told me the harder he tried to listen, the less he could hear," wrote Japanese gamelan leader Shin Nakagawa in 1993. "He merely became conscious of himself listening to Nature – or at least trying to listen."

"But suddenly," Nakagawa continues, "all his listening efforts were interrupted by the cawing of a crow. With this crow there was no way of not listening. As soon as he realised this, Ako himself became irrelevant and was therefore liberated. He was now passive and able to receive nature." Nature, of course, is not always accommodating to manmade itineraries. Our first day on Tango's coast was lost to bad weather, but the sun shone down the second morning, when Suzuki led a small squad of artist friends and admirers to his Space In The Sun. We climbed the gentle slope, negotiating our way through an inquisitive yet largely unimpressed herd of golden brown cattle whose memory spans evidently don't stretch back as far as the early 1990s, when Suzuki's dream Space was the focal point of three festivities of *The Ancient Hill*. Invoking international sound artists like Rolf Julius, Hans Peter Kuhn, Felix Hass, Paul Panthuyens, Christina Kubisch, Suzuki and dancer Junko Wade, his former wife,

Somebody else letting you into their dream space is quite a privilege, but it's also fraught with risk. When you finally chance upon Suzuki's Space In The Sun, your first impression might well be, I climbed a holy mountain and trekked through mud for this? For what confronts you are two crumbling, identical 17 metre long, 3.5 metre high facing walls, built out of 20,000 handmade and outskewed loam bricks, separated by a seven metre floor space constructed from the same materials. But the very act of negotiating the cowpats left behind by cattle, who treat Suzuki's walled-in space as a windbreak, destroys your concentrated act of listening and in the process opens you up to hearing Nature properly. Now you can begin to notice the sound of the wind, the odd bird call, a lowing cow or even the distant noise of farm machinery organising themselves into an utterly beguiling symphony of Nature. And as Suzuki strolls through the walled-in space he and his former wife constructed 15 years earlier, he claps his hands to demonstrate the walls' resonating acoustic properties, or he parades across the valley to reveal how his dreamspace captures and nurtures the echo coming back from Idigawa San, the holy mountain facing it. His actions bring to mind Junko Wade's description of Suzuki dragging twigs across the earth like they were a stylus tracking a record.

As you contemplate the sounds caught up in Suzuki's dream Space In The Sun, admiring the work gone into the construction of what is essentially such a plain, going on ugly space, you agree with Shin Nakagawa when he wrote: "The act of listening to Nature while at the same time destroying Nature forms an interesting contrast – although one must not forget that A Space In The Sun is part of nature too."

"I do not want to make a show of my ecological correctness," he continues, "I cannot survive without making some impression on nature and I destroy life to sustain life like anyone else. Ako's project confronts us with this dilemma in man's biological role."

Descending the ancient hill, we meet two of Suzuki's acquaintances who tend a small plot of land out of a 1960s inspired utopian desire for self-sufficiency. The pair have been pursuing a dream far from Japan's madding crowds for the past few decades. When they hear our itinerary tales in Hokkaido, they reveal they spent some happy years on Japan's northern, second largest island happily following their utopian ideal. A few years ago another Japanese outsider, drummer Ikuro Takahashi, suddenly abandoned all his projects

and returned to his hometown, the Hokkaido capital Sapporo. His unexplained departure perplexed the many musicians he was working with, among them Keiji Hano and Fushitsusha, Chie Muka's Ché Shru and Nagisa Nite. But his presence has done wonders for the local underground scene. Aside from accompanying his Butoh dancer partner Yoko Munono, he appears to be the locus of a healthy young scene, going by the artists he pulls together as supports for visiting UK artist Paul Hood's set at Spiritual Lounge, an occasional dreamspace opened up for outsider performances on the highest floor on one of the city's many youth-targeted department stores. These groups include the splendid, leftbank-like Guache, whose rock noise Improv only begins to fall into place when drummer SuuSuu starts blowing up balloons and deflating them into a mix to simulate Knutrock electronic emissions; Muhammed Ali Kampain, a tremendous hardcore trio with a one-string bassist; and Takahashi solo, performing on an old tree trunk set on an electronically treated rooftop.

Two days later, at a one-off reunion Takahashi arranged for himself and Fushitsusha (which Hano has been running as a duo with himself taking over the drums since Takahashi's departure) in a godforsaken dreamspace just around the corner from Sapporo's prestigious symphony hall, you can understand why the Japanese underground are still perplexed by Takahashi's sudden departure. The one-off nature of this Fushitsusha reunion focuses the event on Takahashi's phenomenal drumming, especially as Hano spends the first 15 minutes struggling to get his FX pedals up and working. With Hano gone to ground, Takahashi and bassist Ozawa work up a fairly yet strangely stark and theatrical soundtrack to cover for Hano's silence. And throughout the set, Takahashi acts not so much as a rock drummer supplying trad powerhouse linnings as an immensely powerful dramatic presence choreographing the massive blocks of noise emanating from Hano with his up and running FX pedals. When the music's over, I compliment Hano on the passages interlocking his programmed percussion with Takahashi's drumming. "I'd be quite happy with just Takahashi's drumming," he remarks. Hopefully some god somewhere is working on reconciling Hano's and Takahashi's geographically removed dreamspaces to bring about a more permanent reunion of the globe's greatest rock trio. □

Special thanks to Akimori Yamasaki and Koiko in Tango

INVISIBLE JUKEBOX: DAMON & NAOMI

Every month we play a musician a series of records which they are asked to identify and comment on – with no prior knowledge of what they're about to hear. Tested by Alan Licht. Photos by Chris Buck



Drummer Damon Krukowski and bassist Naomi Yang founded Galaxie 500 with guitarist/vocalist Dean Wareham in Boston in 1987. Their three albums, *Today* (1988), *On Fire* (1989), and *This Is Our Music* (1990), immediately won them a cult following. Indebted to the softer, melancholy side of The Velvet Underground, The Modern Lovers and Big Star, they pioneered a starkly beautiful, slow-tempo approach to indie rock that set them apart from the nascent Grunge scene and which can still be found in groups like Low.

The group split up in 1991, with Wareham going solo. In 1990 Damon & Naomi had founded Exact Change, a publishing imprint dedicated to reissuing lost works of experimental literature or creating new and definitive translations of the same, with Damon handling the editing and Naomi doing the design and layout. They released an EP under the name Pierre Etoile, but increasingly dissatisfied with the music industry, they considered retiring from music making. Thanks to the urgings of Kramer (who had produced Galaxie 500), they began recording and performing under their own names as a folk duo, with Damon switching to acoustic guitar and both doing vocals. *More Sad Hits* (for Kramer's Shimmy Disc label) was released in 1992, and in 1993 they joined forces with Wayne Rogers and Kate Bigger, formerly of Crystalized Movements, to become the rhythm section of Magic Hour, a loud, psychedelia drenched rock group known for playing sets of two 20 minute songs.

With Magic Hour's demise in 1996, they've devoted their musical energies to Damon & Naomi, recording *The Wondrous World Of Damon & Naomi* (1995) and *Playback Singers* (1998, both on Sub Pop). They also made an album with Japanese acid folkies Ghost, *Damon & Naomi With Ghost* (2000), and have toured consistently with Ghost and White Heaven lead guitarist Michio Kurihara, as documented on *Live In San Sebastian*, and a new studio album scheduled for spring release. Damon has also been the poetry editor of *The Baffler* and the classical music editor of *Pulse*. The Jukebox took place at their home in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

YOKO ONO "MRS LENNON"

FROM *1313/AMPLS* 1991

Damon Krukowski: It's Yoko. It's beautiful, I can't place which record, it's from *Fly*.

DK: Oh, I haven't heard *Fly* in so many years.

Naomi Yang: Do you remember it now?

DK: No. The cadence is very Beatles-ish, there's a song it reminds me of very strongly. It's really beautiful. In my memory *Fly* is a much more abrasive record.

They were probably one of the few people to cover a Yoko Ono song, when Galaxie 500 recorded "Listen The Snow Is Falling" on *This Is Our Music* in 1990. DK: Yeah, we found that song on the B side to "Happy Xmas (War Is Over)". We were on tour in England, we were stuck in a college town and found a little cache of John & Yoko 7"s. It was all songs we knew by him on the A sides and songs we didn't know by her on the B sides. So we bought a bunch of them, took them home, and listened to the songs. Somehow it seemed to fit. NY: It just seemed like a great song.

DK: It's great. When she let herself just do those pretty songs they're really lovely. And then you have John's scum behind it as well. Those records have continued to grow with me. The Plastic Ono Band records I just go back to constantly.

NY: Our cat runs to the other room when we put on the loud Yoko stuff.

DK: It's true, we can't listen to that much Yoko at home, our cat just has a reaction to Yoko Ono. It's hilarious [laughter]. something about her scream, the cat just goes berserk.

In *Lennon Remembers* John says she was a great rock vocalist, as great as Little Richard, and interviewer Jan Wenner was probably scratching his head when he said it, but when you listen to her it's kind of true. DK: Well, making do with the instrument you're given has definitely been our credo.

NY: We're not sure our cat likes our vocals either. [laughter].

HACKAMORE BRICK "OH, THOSE SWEET BANANAS"

FROM *ONE RUSS LEADS TO ANOTHER* (KAMA SUTRA) 1992

DK: Sounds like Lou Reed but I don't recognise the song. Although... maybe not.

It's Hackamore Brick, who cut only one record in 1970. It was produced by Richard Robinson, who did the first Lou Reed album. They were from New York, and really sounded like The Velvet at that time.

DK: Except it's like Velvets with a chorus. [looks at sleeve] I like the mismatched socks. Wow, I never ever came across this. It's funny to hear The Velvets' sound when it does leak out, because when we first came across those records I thought they were unique. But over time it's starting to settle into more of a context. Galaxie 500 was probably one of the first groups to be compared to The Velvets' third album.

DK: I don't know how it started, but it was certainly accurate, we were definitely obsessively listening to the third album over and over.

NY: So we weren't surprised [laughter]. Before that, people rarely copied that album.

Especially during the punk era, White Light White Heat was the one people pledged allegiance to. DK: The third was definitely the one that captured us most at the time. It was that, and Big Star's *Third* the sound of a band after it's been a rock band, in a way. It was something we could imitate.

NY: We were also very consciously compared to [The Velvets' third LP], and then we found all these other musical interests, so it became locked into that era; it's not something we've taken with us. I don't know if we still listen to anything that we were listening to at that time. We're doing such a different thing now - it's so much thinking about singing, whereas when we

were in Galaxie 500 it was like, how to make a band sound, and the singing was not off [the best second, and the lyrics were like, whatever... it was an afterthought].

DK: It wasn't cool to really focus on it in that way. The vocalists we were listening to at the time were Jonathan Richman; we really liked Beat Happening; hardly voices that were necessarily imitable, it's more about the quirky personality.

JOHN & BEVERLY MARTYN "JOHN THE BAPTIST"

FROM *CRASHING WAVES* 1982

DK: Is it Richard and Linda Thompson?

No.

DK: John and Beverly Martyn?

You got it.

DK: Wow. It's really nice. We went through those records, and there were only a few moments I really liked, but I guess I gotta go back to them because this is much better than I remember. [Song ends] That's lovely. I remember taking courage when I first heard these records because they were singing out of tune sometimes [laughs]. I never really got into his solo work, I know it went through a lot of different phases, sometimes I connect with it, sometimes I can't.

You guys were some of the first people I encountered to start referencing British folk, I remember you covering COB's "Spirit of Love" several years ago. NY: We were introduced to all that by Wayne Rogers and Kate Bigger, while we were playing with them in Magic Hour, which was so...

DK: Yeah, it's true, we joined a crazy psychedelic electric band and came out with an education in English acoustic folk [laughs].

NY: And Magic Hour covered The Treas song "Sally Free And Easy". During those years with Magic Hour we started to connect with it, we would continue to do work as a duo, and started getting interested in singing again, or for the first time, really. And those English folk albums were just so inspiring.

DK: Vocals in general had been such a downplayed aspect of the scene that we all came up in, but I think we turned around and started to get intensely interested in vocals, and went back through the 60s and pulled out a stack of records that we never had before. So someone like Sandy Denny was of interest interest, and if you go back to those topic records there's nothing on it but a voice, unaccompanied, like Anne Bland or Sandy Denny.

You're doing a tour with Bridget St John and Espers, a group who draw heavily on the 60s British folk scene. DK: Yeah, we did a show with them and they also covered COB. We were really shocked. Someone who I really enjoy who's working in that vein is Richard Youngs, who, as you're pointing out, has a background in experimental music, not the same overdone rock band thing, but improvisational, noise experiments, and similarly tangent to the folk tradition.

NY: I think it's actually a really exciting moment, there's an incredible energy in the underground again, and it's so great because the early 90s it was so depressing, the underground had been stomped out.

DREDD FOOLE & THE DIN "HARD ROCK (ABSOLUTION)"

FROM *THE WAYS OF FIRE* (ECSTATIC VOICE) 2000

DK: Sounds like Gong playing Light. Is this new or old?

New.

DK: Really? Now that I'm hearing the voice - is it Dan Irton, aka Dredd Foole?

Yes.

DK: I recognise his breathing.

NY: Really? [laughs?]

DK: Is this the thing he did with Chris Corsano and Thurston [Moore]?

Yeah.

DK: Sounds great. The recording's beautiful too, because you can't tell how many people it is. It could almost be like a Scratch Orchestra thing, there could be 100 people in that room, making tiny little sounds. Dan was always an amazing performer, he stood out on that Boston scene, for us, when he was fronting a band as well, it was always so exciting when he took the stage. **Who else from Boston do you feel a camaraderie with?** DK: We first started seeing Dread Foele when Galaxie 500 was starting and then it was a very post-Mission Of Burma circle of experimental things that were going on at the fringes of rock here. Which definitely held more interest for us at the time than the generic college rock bands, so we all were known at one point. Also Tiaa Zuck and her various bands—I love what Tiaa is doing now with. Tiaa and Dredd, they were certainly the standout vocalists of our era in Boston, for sure. Corsano sounds great on this too, sounds like AMM. That kind of thing where you can't put your finger on any of the sounds coming off the drums.

QUICKSILVER MESSENGER SERVICE

"CODINE"
FROM *MISSION OF BURMA* (PSYCHO) 1984
RECORDED 1988

DK: Is it Quicksilver?

Wow, you're betting a thousand today.

DK: Live, maybe?

Yes. Do you recognise the song?

DK: No, what is it?

"Codine" by Buffy Sainte-Marie. You guys have done a lot of covers and this, I think, is a really good example of a cover version. Like Galaxie did a band arrangement of Jonathan Richman's a cappella "Don't Let Our Youth Go To Waste".

DK: Right, from a semi-official bootleg. We love playing covers.

DK: Yeah, you just seem so much. It's a way to get out of yourself and in somebody else's head or to listen to what you think they're playing, because you're trying to figure out what the chords are [laughs].

DK: Back in the Galaxie days we did other people's songs just to learn how to play. But it's still a great pleasure. If we sit around for weeks, we often pick out a song and go through it. And it's always been a fun way to let loose when you're recording, to not have to be yourself, to have the suggestion of another personality from outside the band.

NY: It's like a collaboration. Sometimes you'll hear a track and just be so beautiful you want to sing it.

DK: It's fun to play something you wish you'd written.

DK: The guitar is pretty unmistakable. [Quicksilver's John] Coppola sounds great. You probably know [Ghost/Haven's Heaven guitarist] Michio Kunihiro is a big Coppola fan. The best story we have about that is a really wonderful moment we had on tour, when we went to the Rock 'N' Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland with Kun. They had Coppola's amp in the lobby. He just drove in front of it and was studying it, thunderstruck that it was there. We wanted to take his picture in front of it, and the guards wouldn't let us. Have you ever seen the video of this crazy cruise thing? Two amps hung together with horns at the top. And they also had his custom pedalboard with lights from trucks on it.

WHITE HEAVEN

"COLD HOUR"

FROM *LEVITATION (THE NOW SOUND)* 1988, RECORDED 1988

DK: It sounds like Wayne [Rogers]. Is it Tweated Village? No. It's White Heaven.

DK: Oh my god. Is it a bootleg or released?

It was a pretty limited record.

DK: [Looking at sleeve] Wow, this is fantastic. I love how Kun puts himself go live. The studio versions of White Heaven is so much more restrained. I wonder what Kun thinks of it. He's very self-critical. I can't believe Kun was doing this in 88 and here we all were in our

indie rock bands and we didn't know.

When was the first time you heard him play?

DK: We really first heard Kun when he came over with Ghost, the second Ghost US tour. The first Ghost tour was without Kunihiro, that was 1995 and Magic Hour toured with them. They then came back and Kun was in the band and our jaws dropped. We were unprepared, totally. The Ghost orchestras have their moments of explosion, but they're also very carefully arranged, everything has its role in the band's sound. So there were only moments in that show where he would let go like this, but he also solos, as you know, at incredibly controlled playing, at fitting into an arrangement, which is what he does with us. NY: It's something I've learned so much more about from playing with him, just listening how he answers our voices. It made me think much more about playing bass, because I'm never playing bass and singing at the same time, but now as I'm singing more in the studio, I'm using the bass differently, instead of just sort of ploughing ahead under the singing [laughs]. DK: He's also extraordinarily careful, which is why you only hear him roar totally loose like that in certain contexts, because he's so careful to work his tone, his sound, everything, into what's happening. We've seen him make minute adjustments in tone, or technique, in order to better fit his guitar part with what we're doing, or with Ghost. It's phenomenal, this fine, fine tuning that's going on all the time. You only get to see those moments live, which was partly why we wanted to make a live record with him.

NY: I don't think he ever plays the same thing twice.

ERIK FRIEDLANDER

"I AM FILTHY"

FROM *MAJORS/DOCTOR BRISLANDS* 2008

DK: Is it a cello? Only? I don't know the player.

DK: Oh, is it the Malsdor record?

Yes, I was wondering if he contacted you, as he uses the Exact Change translation of Malsdor.

DK: The label wrote for permission to quote from it. **Would you ever think about recording something in response to a work of literature in this way? Has your work with Exact Change impacted on your music?**

DK: Not any way that's obvious to us....

NY: Maybe just the spirit of artistic experimentation.

DK: We do our share of lifting from books [laughs]. But that's just theft, that's not a response. I think we take a lot of inspiration from things like *Ulysses*, for example, is a book that I have to keep at arm's length a little bit, because it is an absolutely terrifying book, a pure investigation of evil and the dark. And that's not something that I'm personally drawn to do.

Even though you're wearing all black.

DK: Right [laughs]. But it's a work that I admire, it's a work that has been inspiring to so much other work that I do feel even more personally attached to.

It's interesting that a lot of the stuff Exact Change has published is by people who were not necessarily writers, like Cage, Feldman, or Chris....

DK: I've heard more and more about Exact Change. It wasn't a conscious plan but we've noticed it too. I'm not sure where it comes from but we definitely feel a great sympathy with a lot of those artists who have come to their genres at oblique angles. Even Malsdor, I feel, as sort of a masterpiece written by a non-writer. It's so singular, it's not a novel, it's not a memoir, you can't say what it is. And I am continually drawn to books in particular, but maybe other forms of art too, whose form can't be easily defined.

KAZUKI TOMOKAWA & KAN MIKAMI

"MEDLEY"

FROM *GO (IN) PSY* 1984

DK & NY: [As singing starts] Oh, it's Tomokawa.

NY: The last time we went we got to see Tomokawa

play live, it was fabulous.

DK: It was just him and a pianist, in a very small club. He's an incredibly powerful performer, you can imagine. He incorporates that whole acoustic guitar tradition that we were talking about before, but he incorporates this whole other element of emotional projection, a raw projection of his energy, into the songs, just incredibly intense. It's funny how you can hardly say this is a folk song, and yet I feel it's very connected to the folk tradition, and I guess somewhere where that crosses is that aspect of acoustic music that I love so much. That doesn't translate when you say to someone "folk music" — obviously they're not thinking of Tomokawa, it's relieving Joam Boaz. NY: They're not thinking "lead folk".

In Japan, do they relate you to the acid folk thing?

DK: No, I guess a certain aspect of our audience receives us as coming out of the American indie rock... I hesitate to call it "tradition" [laughs]. And then there's the aspect that understands our relationship to Ghost and to the local underground music. And that's of course small. The Japanese underground is an underground. We expressed enthusiasm for Tomokawa, which bewildered everyone. We wanted to see his show, which surprised even some of our friends.

NY: Even Tomokawa [laughs].

DK: Mikami is recorded more solidly in the underground, but Tomokawa's reputation separates him from it. People were taken back when we went to see him.

NY: And there weren't a lot of people volunteering to come with us [laughs].

DK: But he's really really nice. I think of him as a very Afforded Jarry-like character, he leads a mysterious life. We've been told he makes his living as the tipster for bicycle races in Japan. My understanding is he writes the odds and bets himself. He's a professional gambler, singer and poet, and his poems — these are his paintings on a lot of the PSF covers. I asked him if he like Jarry, and he gave me the most Jarry-like answer: "I've never heard of him, I don't read any books. I have no use for literature, I know nothing about it." I took that to mean yes, he loves Afforded Jarry.

MATCHING MOLE

"SIGNED CURTAIN"

FROM *MATCHING MOLE* 2008 1992

DK: [Immediately] It's Robert Wyatt. My guess is it's the Matching Mole radio sessions that came out recently.

NY: His voice just destroys you.

I know you're huge fans. Is it the singing, the songwriting, or all of the above?

DK: And also the drumming — he's an absolute hero of mine in every respect. It's like when we were talking about Velvet Underground's third record, the kind of sync you can get into, you just feel like you're absorbing it thoroughly, and we've definitely gone through that with Robert Wyatt's records. But it's all aspects of his music making. I understand that he has his jazz vocabulary but was playing pop music, and that's a wonderful mix. I can't stay still, but it's very much what's in my ears from my childhood, and then we were playing simple pop songs. I relate to something about that collision in Wyatt's music. NY: And then we basically had to re-invent how we played music after Galaxie 500 broke up. For a while we thought we'd skip it, but then as we just couldn't help keep doing it, there was no way we could keep doing it the way we had been in Galaxie 500, and it took us a very long time. Each time we make a new record... you have to find out what your voice is in the present, not your singing voice but your way to express yourself. And he had to do that in such an extreme way. DK: Definitely. But I think he also continues to do that. Every time he makes a record he has once again



readdressed the question, 'Why make the record?' and I think he keeps answering it, in a new and a positive manner, which is why I look forward to every single thing he does. I think every Robert Wyatt fan always fears that he won't find a reason to make the next record. But that's something we live through ourselves, we're always asking, Do we have a reason to make another record? And it takes us time to reconcile that.

NY: It's a very different thing when people are making a record because they have something to say, rather than, you know, you're in a band and you have to make a new one every year, and you have to stay on tour....

DK: He also has the capability to use a very silly lyric, which is something I really admire. That Matching Mole song is among the silliest, which is why I think he called a song "Moon in June", to poke fun at that. I can enjoy a lot of nonsense in songs. My mother's a jazz singer and I grew up with all the jazz standards in my head, and those songs are the opposite of high mindedness, they tend toward silly and goofy rhymes.

NY: But you're always demanding that our lyrics have a logic and a meaning, and if they don't make sense to some internal logic....

DK: The logic I do swear by, in that regard, it might be obscure to anybody else. But I love weird logic. I love Kafka, Joseph Cornell's logic, artists who adhere so strictly to their sense of what would follow next.

Are there any lyricists who provide a model of sorts?

DK: Naomi might disagree but for me, Dylan, especially *The Basement Tapes*, where I think Dylan really was the surrealist poet that Allen Ginsberg thought he was. It was not, I think, in the great, weighty songs, it was in the nonsense songs of *The Basement Tapes*.

NY: This is where it veers into theory for me [laughs]. DK: *The Basement Tapes* are an example of that kind of internal logic. They make no sense whatsoever, they're total strings of puns and nonsensical jokes. They veer toward the clever, and we have a fear of the clever.

NY: But you have no fear of the cliché.

DK: No, I love cliché. And *The Basement Tapes* are filled with cliché. But Dylan in that period is using a logic that I recognise from literary heroes as well.

ELIZABETH COTTEN "OH BABE IT AIN'T NO LIE"

FROM FOLK SONGS AND INSTRUMENTALS WITH GUITAR
SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS 1959

DK: I don't recognise it.

It's Elizabeth Cotten.

DK: Oh, I've never heard this. You know who told me to listen to this — Devendra Banhart.

That makes sense. Dylan covered this song.

DK: Actually the instrumental intro, I thought it was Dylan, something about the fingerpicking.

Her voice is all over the place but it really works.

DK: That's something I relate to — I think we've always had that gap between the reality and what we're playing in our heads. You reach for things that you know you can't do, but you reach for them anyway, and I think sometimes happy accidents fall out. I think there's a lot of illusion necessary to get yourself up on stage at least if you have the kind of self-doubt that Naomi and I carry with us as performers. There's a way that you can use that. It's not just something that cripples you, you can reach past your ability all the time, and I think what you come up with is not what you were dreaming about, but you come up with something else that you needed the dream to come into existence.

NY: There's a tradition of that in lots of arts, people painting and they think they're painting one thing and it's not at all, but it's something in and of itself. It's a way to actually do something. □

DRUM SCHLINGER

With a schedule that includes the blazing free Improv of Scorch Trio and collaborations with Ken Vandermark and Mats Gustafsson, as well as garage rock unit The Thing, Norwegian drummer Paal Nilssen-Love is one of Europe's finest utility players

Words: Mike Barnes. Photo: Trygve Indrelid





I meet Pål Nilsson-Love in his London hotel lounge during extra time in the Rugby World Cup Final. Once the hubbub has died down, we find a quiet corner to discuss what musicians – specifically drummers – he has found most inspirational. Tony Oxley, Art Blakey, John Stevens, Paul Lovens and Elvin Jones are initially mentioned, then Al Green drummer and former MG, Al Jackson for the crispness of his style, The Mothers (of course!), Toots And The Maytals and Lee Scratch Perry. “Fortunately, I did listen to pop music and one stage punk music,” he continues. “I was into that for quite a few years and all of a sudden, today, I’m going back to that, listening to The Dead Kennedys again.”

Although he is unlikely to be covering “Holiday in Cambodia” in the near future, in this 29-year-old Norwegian drummer’s largely improvised music, echoes can be heard – some rather distant, admittedly – of his diverse tastes. His playing slips with ease from rolling, tumbling, abstract rhythms into propulsive, agitated bop and veers towards improvisational hyper-rock with Scorch Trio, which also features bassist Ingebrigt Håker Flaten, and Finnish guitarist Raoul Björkenheim. Nilsson-Love is also inclined to introduce defined patterns into freeform flow, aware that the more punist free improvisers may view this as an imposition on the freedom of the music.

“I know,” he affirms, “but I think that is come in a way, saying ‘No, you can’t do this’, or running out as soon as a rhythm comes in. I think it’s good if you can be as free as that and include all those elements. It all depends on which school you come from. Now you’ve got the new school of the more silent stuff, which I’m not that much into. There’s not enough energy to it, although [trumpeter] Axel Dörner does it well solo, using extremely quiet sounds. But I can’t see the point if you’ve got four or five people doing it together – [rather than a drummer] you’re better off with two pieces of sandpaper.”

Born in Stavanger, the son of jazz drummer Terry Nilsson-Love, Pål’s passion was also for the drums. His parents ran the Stavanger Jazzklub from 1973-86, during which time his enthusiasm for the music was fired by witnessing performances by musicians like Oxley, Billy Bang, David Murray and Ronald Shannon Jackson. His most significant early group was Pocket Corner – in his mid-teens – with trumpeter Dikrik Ingvaldsen, the Frode Gjerstad trio and The Circulation Totale Orchestra.

One of the signatures of Nilsson-Love’s style is his exploitation of the timbral possibilities of the drum kit. He usually plays his father’s old Hayman set – its more rounded tones pleasingly at odds with the harder, chunkier sounds of many modern kits – but this exploratory approach is often prompted by necessity. He explains: “Last year I was on tour in the US [with the Frode Gjerstad Trio] and we were borrowing a kit at each club, quite crappy kits. But you end up trying to pull out sounds that you’ve not heard in any other kit, and probably didn’t exist in that kit before. You surprise yourself each time and it’s good to push yourself.”

Via the Oslo label Smalltown Supersound, Nilsson-Love has released a series of duet CDs with

saxophonists: Ken Vandermark (*Dual Pleasure*), Mats Gustafsson (*I Love It When You Share*) and, this month, Håkon Kornstad. He’s aware – and respectful – of the “heavy history” behind this format, citing Peter Brötzmann with Hamid Drake, and Coltrane with Rashied Ali. On “Anno 1240” from the Vandermark set, he plays with a torrential intensity, his bass drum kicking its way obliquely into the intricate, furious flow, before peaking at a range of mountainous snare rolls. Here, the accolades of “best young Norwegian drummer” unnecessarily complicate matters – at this level musicians are not better than each other, merely different. And he is keen to expand his collaborations, planning duet recordings with laptop player Lasse Marhaug and the organist Nils Henrik Asheim.

Nilsson-Love’s extraordinary solo CD *Shocks And Stones* (Sofa) was recorded in Schierberg Church, Oslo, in 2001 and moves from meditative cymbal bowing to explosive full-kit outbursts. “It’s such an extreme challenge,” he explains. “You’ve only got yourself to rely on and it’s a great fucking look doing it. You’re out there on your own and you have to work your ass off both mentally and physically. Afterwards you’re totally worn out. And it’s interesting when you’ve got a flow going, where you’ve gone into that ecstatic feeling, then suddenly become aware and think about doing something to change direction.”

A musician’s ability to lose themselves is something he prizes highly. During a Scorch Trio set at the 2002 Oslo Jazz Festival, he recalls, “Raoul [Björkenheim] flipped. One thing I like about him is that he’s crazy enough to include elements that you wouldn’t expect. He might start singing – which isn’t always that good – but I enjoy it when he loses it. That’s one of the things I like to experience with musicians. If they can just let go – suddenly you’re at a point where you don’t consciously know what you’re doing.”

Upcoming projects include appearances with the trio of Frode Gjerstad and pianist Sten Sande, a live duet with Peter Brötzmann, more work with Scorch Trio and merging two of his groups, Schooldays (with Vandermark and Håker Flaten) and Atomic, into an octet for a tour of the USA. The Thing, with Håker Flaten and Gustafsson, have ostensibly little to do with the genre but are nonetheless keen to demonstrate their interest in garage rock by playing double bills with rock groups.

“Just to point out that the musicians in both bands and the listeners are enjoying both kinds of music, and there are so many similarities between the different types of music.”

Nilsson-Love’s workrate is nearly as impressive as his technique: he has already appeared on well over 40 albums. Not that he is planning on slowing down. “There’s enough going on, yeah,” he affirms with a smile. “There’s a temptation to quit all the groups and start from scratch again – but there’s no point in doing that. But I can’t complain, it would just be good to have twice as much time to have more groups and more projects.” □ Schilling with Håkon Kornstad is out this month on Smalltown Supersound. Website: www.pnillove.com

CINEMA FOR THE EARS

French aviator Jérôme Noetinger is on a mission to keep the pioneer spirit of musique concrète alive, with his DIY screen happenings and membership of Improv ensembles Quintet Avant and TIMEO. Meanwhile, for the past 15 years his groundbreaking Metamkine label and mail order outlet have kept experimental music's supply lines open

Words: Dan Warburton Photos: Aurélien Darnaud

A performance by the Quartet Avant is a sight to behold. On a large table cluttered with yards of magnetic tape looped precariously round symbol stands are three Revox tape recorders, Laurent Sassi's mixing desk and Marc Pichelin's analogue synth. Jean Polaire swings a small loudspeaker round creating squeals of feedback, Jérôme Noetinger scrapes the recording heads of his Revox with a rubber mallet, and Lionel Marchetti swats a suspended symbol with a large cardboard tube, inadvertently snapping the loop of magnetic tape in the process. Without batting an eyelid, he picks up the mic and asks Noetinger to pass him the Scotch tape. All this is recorded and fed back into the mix. It doesn't just look good, it sounds great. No wonder Noetinger describes playing in this group as a "total joy." Joy or not, he approaches performances with the Quartet Avant with the same commitment and seriousness that has characterised all his activities over the past 15 years, as a member of the Cellule d'Intervention Metamixine, director of the label of the same name, as well as an outspoken writer and polemicist.

Over coffee earlier that afternoon, Noetinger recalls how in 1980 he first heard Pierre Henry's *Vanotons For A Door And A Sign on the wall*. "My mum thought it was a scandal. Noise introduced as music?" Another epiphany from the same period was a TV programme on sound recording for the cinema. "I saw two people trying onions and recording it at the same time," he smiles. "I found out later one was the composer Christian Zanési, for the René Lakos film *Les Maltrés Du Jumps*. The acoustemic dimension – radio – listening without seeing the source, and the visual dimension – TV – showing how it was done. Permanent back and forth between listening to and making music. That's what musique concrète is all about."

Though Jérôme was born in Marseille in 1968, the Noetingers lived in various locations in France before moving to Caen in Normandy. As a fanzine writer there, he "discovered a whole lot of experimental stuff I didn't know about. Throbbing Gristle, of course, but also Raif Wehowsky's group P16.D4, Merzbow, Nurse With Wound and Jean Marc Wizenza – for me that's the electroacoustic music too." Moving to Grenoble in 1986, he set up a cassette label, *Développement Culturel*, and heard about nearby Fontaine's COREAM studio, created at the time by Xavier Garros. "I didn't take real lessons," Noetinger recalls, "but I learnt how to use a mixing desk, how to place microphones and how to listen. I discovered that close links between making something and being able to hear it."

Shortly after his arrival in Grenoble, Noetinger formed the Cellule d'Intervention Metamixine with several local film makers and projectionists, and has continued to use the name Metamixine – which he insists has "no meaning... we just wanted a kind of neologism" – for his mail order distribution service and record label. "At the beginning," he continues, "the Cellule performed with prerecorded tapes and slides, but we soon realised we could do it live. I wanted to apply what I'd

learnt in the studio to a performance situation."

The Cellule's live appearances are unique and arresting experiences. The projectionists crouch on the floor, as if engaged in trench warfare, moving equipment around the performance space to vary the angle of projection. Images hurtle in and out of focus, and the smell of burning film stock stings the nostrils as reels of grainy film are set on fire to spectacular effect, while Noetinger huddles over his objects and contact mics, his tiniest gestures triggering apocalyptic waves of sound. It's about as far as you can get from the pixelated precision of most nightclub lightshows. At points to stress that the Cellule is above all a live project, Noetinger rules out any possibility of a DVD or CD-ROM. "Seeing the films without sound or listening to the music without visuals is of absolutely no interest whatsoever," he asserts.

His equipment consists of two tape recorders, a mixing desk, an analogue synth and various objects played with contact mics. The present line-up of Noetinger, Christophe Rager and Xavier Querel has been together since 1991, but the Cellule has collaborated with many other artists, including guitarist Daniel Zeln and percussionist Lê Quan Ninh. For 1998's *Musique Action Festival* in Vendoures-sur-Nancy, they enclosed themselves – along with Lionel Marchetti (electronics), Mathieu Werchowski (violin) and two lighting engineers – inside 'Le Cube', a performing space ten metres square and five high, where each face was a screen around which the public could move freely.

In 1987 Noetinger started the Metamixine mail order catalogue and label with albums by Lieutenant Carmel and Kroschewski. "At the time I didn't have a clear idea of what direction I wanted the label to go in," he recalls. In 1992 he started the *Cinéma Pour l'Œille* collection – 33 CDs of musique concrète – which now runs to 33 releases.

"The name's a kind of hook, if you like, both commercial and poetic," Noetinger explains. "When I listen to things, removed from the source, it often evokes images. Careful: we're not in the domain of narrative here, but of images in movement. I'm talking about 'sound images', not film music."

3" CDs may be common currency nowadays, but back then the format was something of a novelty. "It was used a lot in advertising, for promotional CDs in magazines," he continues. "I wanted to work with the 20 minute format for the reason that there are many pieces about that length, things you often find stuck on compilations where they don't have the same impact as they would if they were alone." Several composers were commissioned to create works for the collection, including Michel Chion, Ralf Wehowsky, Bernhard Günter and Lionel Marchetti, while others such as Alan De Filippis, Hervé Costello and Dominique Petitgand were chosen on the basis of 'tapes they'd sent in... still get lots of offers," says Noetinger, "including many pieces that are electroacoustic but don't enter into the field of musique concrète. I never put out anything I don't like, even if it's by a big name." One such name

is Jim O'Rourke, whose *Rules Of Reduction* is the series' bestseller. Another priority was to make available hitherto unreleased material such as Michèle Bokanowski's Tabou, Luc Ferrari's Unheimlich Schön and Elaine Rudigue's Biogenesis.

The sheer diversity of the *Cinéma Pour l'Œille* collection is an astounding testament to Noetinger's catholic taste and enthusiastic championing of musique concrète in all its forms. "When you start working with sounds," he enthuses, "you begin to listen to music differently. I tend to hear it these days from the point of view of how it's made rather than for its purely musical characteristics. In a way, it's removed some of the sense of wonder I'd had before. Some things seem simple, but it's not because they're simple that they aren't any good. Elaine Rudigue's case in point. Her music takes you beyond the questions of how it was made. You don't even ask the questions anymore. It's only after several minutes that you realise you're no longer in the same sequence."

For Noetinger, discovering lost masterpieces and unearthing new talent is as important as releasing works by established names. Another revelation was *Weekend*, by German painter and film maker Walter Ruttmann. "I've always loved cinema," Noetinger confesses. "I worked as a projectionist myself for a while. I knew Ruttmann's *Opus series*, the first abstract films made back in 1921, and I'd read about this 11 minute film without images, *Weekend*. I contacted his daughter in Germany to find out where the tape was. It's an amazing work – in 1930 it anticipates what happened in musique concrète 20 years later. I wanted to show that even before Schoenberg there were people who had this idea of montage and recording but who didn't refer to it as music. Ruttmann never talked about music, he talked about film for the ear."

Noetinger's only outing so far on the label, 1991's *Glone 6*, was a direct response to that year's Gulf War. Its brutal cut 'n' splice montage of radio broadcasts, gritty punk and vicious noise isn't exactly subtle, but neither were the glib pronouncements of George Bush Sr. "I wanted it really raw, rapid reaction, a coup de punch [punch]. I should probably do a sequel today," he observes caustically. "But right now I'm taking a bit of time off. I'll be restating the collection in 2004."

Apart from *Glone 6*, Noetinger's output as a solo artist has been limited to a handful of brief contributions to compilations, of which *Glone 6*, a two CD set on the Boston-based label Intramix, is worth seeking out (though prospective buyers should be warned that Noetinger's "Larsen Lux", an inglorious blast of direct to DAT feedback, is mistakenly labelled under Rolf Meekop. Instead, collaboration is the name of the game, be it with the multinational electronic ensemble NIMED, French free rock collective 60 Etages, the 'cracked everyday electronics' of Swiss duo Voice Crack, or the 'endangered guitar' of Hans Tammen. But Noetinger's most frequent playing partner by far has been his friend, composer and electronic

improviser Lionel Marchetti. "I met Lionel when he came to the studio in Fontaine with Xavier Sarras," he recalls. "We first played together in 1993. Our work has gradually evolved, and our equipment with it."

Although the pair frequently perform live, the majority of their releases are studio reworkings of their raw material (usually by Marchetti). A notable exception was 1999's untitled CD on Harmonia release with violinist Mathieu Wurchowski. "That was [label runner] Bruce Russell's idea," Noetinger explains. "He'd heard a tape of a gig with Lionel and Mathieu, and said he wanted to release something by the group. I sent him two pieces we recorded in Lille and Turin." The duo have also contributed to Staircase's ongoing Mort Aux Vaches series, and two tracks to Raffi Warchowski's live CD *epic Tulus* (Selection 1997). 2001's *Double, Wash* (Gro), also featuring Voice Crack, and *Rouge Gris Bruit* (Portabloc) with pianist Sophie Agnès, are spectacular examples of Marchetti's studio work. "This label 'improvised music' bothers us," Noetinger winces. "When you tell people you play 'improvised music' it's like you're not improvising at all. Improvisation, like composition, is a practice linked to a way of life, not a musical genre."

Noetinger's latest project with Marchetti, the *Quintet Avant*, features Jean-Pierre, Marc Poirier and Laurent Sassi on tape recorders, analogue synth and live mix, respectively, from the Toulouse-based *Ribuste* collective. Convened at 1998's *Musique Action Festival* in Vandœuvre – "there was another group playing after us, so we were the 'quintet before', hence 'Quintet Avant' – they spent five days recording in Vandœuvre's OCAM studios. The five musicians have a ball creating a wild and wonderful mishmash of bleeps, whooshes, screaming operatic divas and bewitching songbirds. The recording session yielded several hours of music characterised by a warm, dusty *Rever* feel-to-reel sound, more of which Noetinger intends to release on forthcoming albums."

In 2003 Jon Abbey's Enshville label released *What A Wonderful World* (the album's working title *Rever Chix Peppers* was eventually abandoned), which terms Noetinger up with Marseille turntablist and electronics whiz Erik M. "Like all Enshville projects, it was Jon's idea," clarifies Noetinger. "I made two tapes to Erik's place to record. We made a selection, reorganised it and tidied it up. It was quite quick."

Noetinger also appears on the latest release on Christof Kuzman's Charisma label, with Kuzman, Werner Dufeldacker, dabo3 and Kevin Drumm. He has performed twice with guitarist Drumm, but declined an invitation from Dominique Répécaud to appear with him and Erik M at this year's *Musique Action*. "I played there a lot last year. I thought I might give someone else a chance," he says, with a fleeting smile.

It was in Vandœuvre in May 2000 that the MIMÉO "orchestra" performed their now legendary 24 hour concert (reviewed in *The Wire* 198). Of the 12 participating musicians only Noetinger, Kaffe Matthews and Phil Durant managed to stay the course – "I did sleep for about 15 minutes, standing up," remarks

Noetinger. "There's a physical dimension about electronics that's completely different. On a laptop you can set up a sequence that will mutate all by itself, or I can leave a loop running and go do something else."

Like, for instance, recording Christian Fennasz snoring backstage and later inserting it into the performance.

Most recently, MIMÉO played at London's Serpentine Gallery last September (see *The Wire* 236) in a programme curated by Kaffe Matthews. "There was no stage as such," recalls Noetinger, "but it was amazing to see how the public keeps its old habits, even if the performing space is different." When asked about the orchestra's future plans, he sighs. "We're all busy with different projects and communication's difficult. One of Keith [Rowe]'s ideas is for us each to submit our hours of music and have the whole thing mixed down. Pushing the concept to the limits."

Though he steadfastly refuses to consider himself as a journalist ("I'd take that as an insult," he apes), Noetinger continues to promote new music in print with a particular proselytising zeal in the pages of *Revue & Compagnie*, a quarterly magazine he founded back in 1989 with Olivier Masson. R&C has long been an invaluable source of information on the 'improvised'/electronic music scene, not only in France, but also Japan, thanks to contributions from the likes of A Brüt Secret/Turk's Dream's Michel Herizte. In the past three years, he has published broad interviews with Masami Akita, Taku Sugimoto, Masayoshi Urahe, Yasunao Tone and many others.

In June 1999, Jean-Christophe Camps (of Kristoff K. Roll) submitted a devastating critique in R&C 40 of a TV documentary by François Delalande on the INA/GRM, which provoked a furious response from the director. "I agree with Jean-Christophe 100 per cent," states Noetinger. "The film was total stupidity, total shit. Don't let me have any quibbles about attacking the establishment? "I don't have to situate myself in relation to them," he adds bluntly. "The situation in France is exceptional. There's no country in the world with as many organisations to promote electroacoustic music, but if they carry on the way they're going they'll all go under. They all have a very defined power structure imposed by the mediocre composers who run them, and most provide no possible means of exchanging ideas about composition. Apart from being familiar with the music they produce, I have no contact with them."

Noetinger is also vociferously critical of the French Culture Ministry's tendency to institutionalise. In a blistering article in a 1998 issue of R&C, he wrote: "They've never understood a thing about musique concrète, preferring to ignore the avenues of exploration that Pierre Schaeffer opened up so they can hide behind the prestige of IRCAM technology. One might wonder if studios such as these aren't themselves responsible for the situation, since their head-in-the-sand attitude has produced nothing." The subject of the article, "Assugetti à La BFM" – which you could translate as "Slave To The Rhythm" – is

another of Noetinger's pet peeves: the globalisation of Techno by the media (both popular and 'serious') and its appropriation by the establishment. A particularly dumb remark by a journalist from French magazine *Télérama* ("Today's DJs have invented electronic music") was like a red rag to a bull. "How did composers like Karlheinz Stockhausen, Tod Dockstaider and Bernard Parmegiani ever manage to create their masterpieces in the 1950s and 70s?" he stormed. "Were they waiting for the arrival of digital technology, the miracle machine that would allow them to realise their dreams as easily and quickly as possible [with the attendant notion of 'profitability']? No, they worked with the tools they had, and created timeless masterpieces."

An innocent question about what cheesy French pop song he has 'sampled' on *What A Wonderful World* brings the curt reply, "I don't sample. I record. The idea exists today that recording appeared with the invention of the sampler in the 1980s. Today, we don't record any more, we sample. Sampling has become the banal act, the design zero... I can't stand the new generation hacking old vocabulary. I hate this idea that before samplers nobody could record. Schaeffer did it in 1948! Nobody ever used the word analogue before digital came along." Not that Noetinger has anything against digital technology per se: "Maybe one day I'll have ProTools to use in the studio, but in performance I like that physical dimension, that relation between image and sound. I still haven't exhausted the possibilities of the tape recorder. I discover things every time. Not long ago, everybody came off of having a Revolver it was the Rolls Royce! Today there's this absurd idea of 'progress', this imposition of new technology by the market. There's something totalitarian about it. It's like asking a violinist why he doesn't play a computer."

Of all his diverse activities, Noetinger admits that performing is his first priority. "Direct contact with a public is very important. Many people will love a concert – they might even buy a CD afterwards knowing it helps the musicians out – but they won't listen to this kind of music in the same way back at home. Recording through a pair of mics gives a completely different impression than being there. You make a physical effort to go to a concert – you're there to listen. At home you can be disturbed by the phone or whatever. There are too many discs, far too many – but there'll never be enough places to play."

Far too many discs? Noetinger should know: his *Metamix* mail order catalogue contains over 2700 entries, and for the many small independent labels that have sprung up in recent years in France and abroad, its support and distribution is of critical importance.

"I started the catalogue at the end of 1987. I found cassettes at first, then a few vinyls," he says. "Other people were running lots of the time – Auto, Front De l'Est and Odd Size – but I was interested in musique concrète. Back then the INA/GRM discs were distributed by Harmonia Mundi, and that was all."

Metamixine really took off in '92." The catalogue subsequently broadened to include engineered music in all its forms, and today Noetinger's online mail order service is, for many people, the best means available to obtain cutting edge music on hard to find imprints.

Amazingly, Noetinger finds time to listen to every album he receives, and keeps a copy of each. "I'm lucky to live in a large house," he explains with a smile. "I intend to provide access to people so that they can discover this music. Open my collection to the public as a centre of research and documentation." Has being familiar with such a vast corpus of new music influenced his own working methods as a performer? "Sure, the music I listen to, the books I read, the walks I take in the mountains... it all influences what I do. What influences me most is playing itself, meeting people and working together."

In recent months, Noetinger has become increasingly involved in the protracted "intermittent de spectacle" dispute that has seen the consolidation of several major French festivals. He explains: "The status of intermittent de spectacle dates back to 1936. In 1965 and 1968 two appendices to the legislation made provisions for those working in the domain of live performance and audiovisual – the majority of artists and technicians in France – to be eligible for unemployment benefit for those periods of the year when they were not working, provided they could justify a total of 507 hours worked in an accredited venue over a full year period."

A recent protocol signed by the more moderate trade unions and the MEDEF (which represents the interests of managers and directors in France) will make access to benefit more difficult: new provisions require the 507 hours to be worked in ten months for technicians, and ten and a half months for artists, with benefit payable for eight instead of 12 months. For Noetinger this "will result in many leaving the profession altogether. It's the acceleration of merchandise culture, a direct attack on many diverse artistic practices – and it's also in apparent contradiction of Article 151 point 4 of the Maastricht Treaty, which allows cultural activities to claim special status."

As an activist in a group of intermittents based in Grenoble, Noetinger has helped organise strikes and boycotts of local festivals, stage public protests at "cultural supermarkets" (the FNAC record chain, the Pathé cinema network) and make direct appeals for support on local radio and at public meetings, with a view to organising nothing less than a general strike. "It's important to show that this is more an attack against working people than it is against culture or artistic practices," he concludes. "It's not a law that will make me change my own artistic practice, it's more about defending workers' rights – and I definitely consider myself as a worker." □ *Quintet Avant's Floppy Nails is out now on Meglo. What A Wonderful World with Erik M is on Erstwhile. Michel Chon/L'Onze/ Marchetti/ Jerome Noetinger's Les 120 Jours is on Fringes. Website: www.mistomixine.com*



"This guy's better than Xenakis!" That was my youthful ebullient reaction to hearing Basil Kirchin's 1974 LP *Worlds Within Worlds Parts 3 & 4* for the first time, nearly 15 years ago, at guitarist Rudolph Grey's flat. Grey explained that Kirchin had been a film composer, his best known work being the score to the Vincent Price cult favourite *The Abominable Dr Phibes* (1971), and had done two records, one for Columbia/EMI and the one we were listening to for *Help* (an early 70s mid-price subsidiary of Island). The 1971 Columbia LP, also titled *Worlds Within Worlds (Parts 1 & 2)*, featured Derek Bailey and Evan Parker, which is how it came to Grey's attention. These albums combined tapes Kirchin had made of various animals and autistic children in Switzerland (students of his wife, Esther) with free improvisation (on the first LP) and a scored chamber group (on the second). They still sound unlike anything recorded before or since, but have languished out of print (and in the case of the first LP, become virtually untraceable) for the past 30 years. The obscurity of Kirchin's albums is truly unfortunate, as they represent a meeting of *musique concrète*, free improvisation, field recording and Western composition that was unprecedented, and remains untouched. Kirchin creates shivering soundscapes from natural sounds, and the improvisers' interaction with them is a refreshing change from the usually self-contained instrumental interplay of the genre. The explosive din generated from the animals and the autistic children's tremulous vocal sounds utterly transcend the usual documentary nature of such recordings and put the intrinsically imitative nature of men-made sound-producing instruments into a new perspective. Kirchin himself had vanished from the music scene soon after their release. Not long after first hearing the albums, I asked Derek Bailey about Kirchin after a gig. He was pleased to have the name brought up, but had no idea where Basil was or what he was up to.

And so I went until this year, when the Trunk label released *Quantum*. Though it's described as an unreleased recording, much of *Quantum* is simply Kirchin's own, superior mix of the first side of *Worlds Within Worlds Parts 1 & 2*. I was able to contact Kirchin through label owner Jonny Trunk and arranged an interview, but sadly Kirchin's current health problems precluded the arranged face to face meeting, so we spoke by phone.

Kirchin's musical path begins in the British big band jazz scene of the 1940s and 50s. Initially the drummer in his father's resident jazz group at the Pavement in Tottenham Court Road, London, he went on to join Harry Roy And His New 1946 Orchestra as a featured soloist, and then The Ted Heath Band. Once he was voted jazz drummer of the year in *Melody Maker*. In 1952 he and his father started a group, first as co-leaders, then with Basil as leader when his father became ill. His father took over again when he returned to fitness. George Martin produced albums by them for Decca and Parlophone, and the group backed up Billy Eckstine and Sarah Vaughan on their respective English tours. Kirchin made his own "perfect" live recordings of the band. These astonished Martin, who felt that Kirchin had taped the band live better than he had in the studio.

But by the late 50s Kirchin grew tired of the music, wishing to write and record "wider" stuff. "There's

only so many ways you can play "Stone Age Mambo," he has said, referring to one of the group's most often repeated tunes. Like so many young artists at the time, he was discovering Eastern philosophy and mysticism, reading works of the Rama Krishna and writing to the movement's Swami. "I wanted to know if I was fooling myself or if I was really 'blessed,'" he said. He visited the Ramakrishna Temple at Daleshaswa on the Ganges in India, spending time at the monastery. The Swami told him he was "blessed" – confirming his belief in himself, not with any religious overtones – and that he should follow his own instincts and knowledge. He then spent two years in Australia, where he lost his entire collection of the "perfect" live recordings and ephemera of the Kirchin band. The loss occurred when a boat he was travelling on was unloading its luggage in a net, which snapped and sent its contents plunging into the sea.

In 1961 he returned to England, living in Hull on the north east coast with his father. There, he began writing scores to imaginary films, recording with the help of a friend who had a studio. This soon translated to real film work in London, where Kirchin was living by the mid 60s. Mainly doing library recordings at first, he soon went to scoring features, starting with a documentary about Swinging London called *Primitive London* (1965). But generally he worked on horror films like *The Shattered Room* (1967) or thrillers like *The Strange Affair* (1968). By now he had also conceptualised what became *Worlds Within Worlds*. The idea, he chuckles now, came to him "in a fraction of a second, but took nine years to realise". The problem was one of technology, but by 1967 the Nagra tape recorder had come out, and an Arts Council grant helped Kirchin secure one, as well as a telescopic microphone and other equipment to bring the concept to fruition.

So off he went to Hampstead Heath to record birdsong and to London Zoo in Regent's Park to collect other animal sounds. He also set about collecting musicians to realise his score for a jazz sextet. There's some confusion about when Kirchin first heard Evan Parker, but it would be reasonable to assume it was around the mid 60s, at Club 50 off Charing Cross Road. Evan's double-tongue/staccato playing was exactly what Kirchin was looking for. He first used the saxophonist on the soundtrack to *Nagatives* (1968), a strange psychosensual drama featuring Glenda Jackson. By the time the sessions for *Worlds Within Worlds* finally took place, Parker, Bailey, Kenny Wheeler, Daryl Runswick (who played with "out" guitarist Ray Russell and, much later, a variety of pop acts), and Graham Lyons were in tow. Kirchin describes the sessions: "The musicians were only allowed to be free within a given genre and that would change. I would count 'four-three-two-one' before the change of mood and genre. There were two days of sessions, with only two or three takes for each section. I paid for the sessions out of my own pocket." Everything, he says, was "accurate to a 24th of a second, everything recorded to click track and on film, not tape initially".

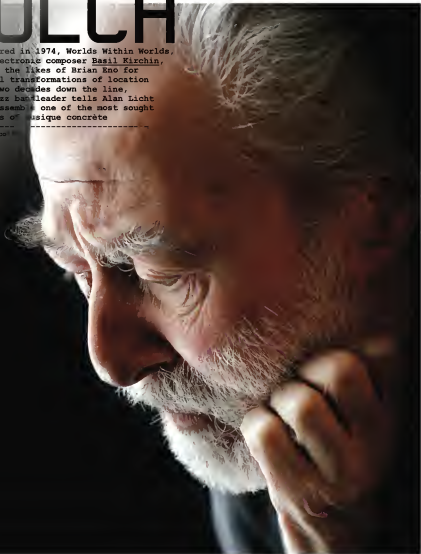
The Columbia album, *Worlds Within Worlds (Parts 1 & 2)*, is the first release from the sessions. (Bailey appears again, uncredited, near the end of the second side of 1974 *Help* release of *Parts 3 & 4*, in an



AUDIO MULCH

When it appeared in 1974, *Worlds Within Worlds*, by English electronic composer Basil Kirchin, was lauded by the likes of Brian Eno for its alchemical transformations of location recordings. Two decades down the line, the former jazz bandleader tells Alan Licht how he came to assemble one of the most sought after classics of musique concrète

Photos: Mykel Nicoletti



extract which presumably dates from the first recordings.) Side one, "Integration", begins with Bailey and Parker playing on top of animal sounds that don't so much suggest the 20th century as where they were recorded but the primordial ooze at the dawn of time, a soundscape as monumentally forbidding, alien and fierce as anything ever made. The second section starts with a xylophone, guitar and organ playing with various animal growls. The third section has Parker trading solos with a bird, then another menacing tape drops in, sounding like Gyuto monks as Parker's playing becomes more frenzied. The second side of the album consists of the same instrumental improvisations without the animal tapes. The first side of *Quantum* reprises "Integration" with Kirchin's own superior mix, which gets a better balance between the tapes and the *Mothers*, and also brings out Runswick's bass more subtly.

Kirchin's reputation as a film composer attracted the attention of Columbia Records, who were interested in capitalising on the vogue for "far out sounds" of the time. But their failure to promote or distribute the album properly freed Kirchin from his contract. He remembers one of the few reviews of the time disparagingly calling him "The Birdman of Alcatraz". Meanwhile he had been in Switzerland with Esther, where she taught a class of nine autistic children. Over a period of ten years, Kirchin made hundreds of tapes of the children and these formed the basis, along with "one gorilla, two hornbills, four flamingos, various amplified insects, animals, birds, jets and other engines, and the sounds of the docks in Hull", of *Worlds Within Worlds Parts 3 & 4*. It was additionally scored for flugelhorn, alphon, woodwinds, cello, arco bass and organ "played for Basil by several close friends". 3 & 4 differs from 1 & 2 in that it feels more like a film soundtrack, with recurrent

instrumental themes framing the tape piece sections. The parts flow into each other continuously, unlike 1 & 2 where each section comes to a halt on Kirchin's cue (much like how the music would end in a specific scene in a film before a cut to the next scene). All the sounds are soaked in flange effects, and the animal sounds are significantly slowed down, greatly enhancing the harmonics, with further overtones added by the flanging. "There's two types of harmonics in the world," Kirchin told *Melody Maker* at the time, "there are inanimate harmonics and chain reaction harmonics. If you play a chord on an electric piano, you get a parallel sound. That's inanimate. But if you play the same chord on acoustic piano, you get sparks in between them. Those are chain reaction harmonics. Musique concrète people record things with inanimate harmonics. 'Non-organic' is a good descriptive word for that stuff."

Kirchin also uses "non-organic" in our conversation, when I asked him about his familiarity with and opinion of musique concrète. "There's two kinds of sounds," he explains, "organic and non-organic, and I didn't like musique concrète's sound sources, which were non-organic and sterile. They're non-emotional, they wouldn't make you cry or score the shit out of you." This is the crux of what makes Kirchin's music unique. He uses emotional found sounds the listener has empathy with and then stretches them to new vistas via tape manipulation. One can relate to the

sounds of children or animals in ways not possible with the creepy choir of *Pierre Henry*, for example. In his sleeve notes to *Quantum*, Kirchin notes that "some of the actual melodies/phrases in [Donis, one of the children] intones are worthy of Coltrane or Eric Dolphy", which reminds me of Captain Beefheart's remark that he wasn't as moved by Dolphy's playing as much as he was by the cry of a goose. The worlds within worlds are the human world in the animal world, their inorganic musical instruments in a world of organic sounds, and the inherent properties of recorded sound that can be unlocked by variance of tape speed and processing. He reflects the free tonality of the animal and children sounds in the music, whether it's the free improv of the first *Worlds Within Worlds* album or the constantly modulating sustained harmonies of the second.

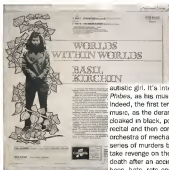
Richard Williams, a critic for *Melody Maker* who was then working in A&R at Island, approached Kirchin around 1972-73 as a fan of his first album and secured the deal. But Williams "had a row" with the label after Kirchin submitted the tape "because they'd edited the masters, taking the kids out because they thought it would be too disturbing". The kids remain on the final release, but presumably their presence is diminished from what Kirchin originally intended. Brian Eno also called Kirchin after the release of the first album and told him he was "totally knocked out" by it, and ended up writing the sleeve notes to Kirchin's second, more melodic album, which came out as *Worlds Within Worlds Parts 3 & 4*.

Incidentally, some confusion still reigns around the correct labelling of each of Kirchin's records. Suffice it to say, Kirchin feels that *Parts 3 & 4* are what he's working on now: a 21st century update of the *Worlds Within Worlds* music. *Quantum* certainly dates from the period of the two albums, and its second side features more extended use of the autistic children. There's a feverish drums/buzz guitar duel with some of the most energetic of the children's tapes, featuring an uncredited "rock guitarist" who turns out to have been future David Bowie/Ian Hunter sidekick Mick Ronson, a fellow Hull dweller. I ask what Ronson made of the music at the time. "He thought I was a nutcase," is Basil's reply.

Kirchin has continued to compose film and television soundtracks for the past three decades, but the scores have never been commercially available – although the soundtrack to *Dr Phibes* is scheduled for release soon. The films themselves enjoy cult followings of varying degrees, but are seldom if ever screened and have never come out on video (again with the exception of *Dr Phibes*, which is out on DVD, and an out of print video of *Negatives*). When asked which of his own scores he likes best, Kirchin mentions *Negatives*, *I Start Counting* (1969) and *The Mutations* (1973). The music in *I Start Counting*, a coming of age story with Jenny Agutter, is significantly lighter than much of his other work, with a female vocalist, acoustic guitar and strings. By contrast, the score to 1973's *The Mutations*, a horror film starring Donald Pleasence as a scientist whose experiments cross humans with plants using his students, is extremely dark. Some of the music is used on *Quantum* near the beginning of Part Two, providing the backdrop for a particularly harrowing rant by an



Original artwork for Basil Kirchin's releases. Bottom: Kirchin's passport photo, 1950



autistic girl. It's interesting that he doesn't mention Or Phibes, as his music is used extensively in the film. Indeed, the first ten minutes are nothing but Kirchin music, as the deranged protagonist Phibes, fully cloaked in black, pounds out a malevolent organ recital and then conducts his "Clockwork Wizards" orchestra of mechanical musicians. Phibes commits a series of murders based on the ten biblical plagues to take revenge on the surgeons he blames for his wife's death after an accident. As several of these involve bees, bats, rats and locusts, the mix of animal sounds with Kirchin's incidental music on the soundtrack is inescapably ironic in light of his Worlds Within Worlds pieces, and their juxtaposition with old time jazz numbers also seems to mirror Kirchin's trajectory. Furthermore, one piece near the end has a melody line that's identical to Eno's "Some of Them Are Old" from *Here Come The Warm Jets* (1973). Perhaps Eno's familiarity with Kirchin's music extended beyond the Columbia album.

And the influence doesn't end there. Kirchin is namechecked on the famous "Nurse List" from the first *Nurse With Wound* LP. David Toop reported in *The Wire* 235 that Matmos's Drew Daniel regards Worlds Within Worlds as one of his favourite musique concrete recordings, and the group Broadcast cite Kirchin's library recordings as an influence on their last album, *He He Sound*. But Rudolph Grey's 1990 track "Flaming Angels" remains the only recording to specifically reference Worlds Within Worlds. Dedicated to Kirchin and the late bassist Harry Miller, it opens with slowed down animal sounds before a free jazz rock quartet of Rashied Ali, Jim Sauter, Grey and yours truly enters over them.

In some ways Kirchin's journey parallels those of Derek Bailey and Steve Reich; Bailey discarded a career in the straightahead jazz world in favour of developing a new musical language, while Reich started out as a drummer, and experimented with tapes of human vocal sounds in the early 60s (although he didn't combine tape with instruments until much later, and differentiated his work from musique concrete in a much different way). Kirchin has recently finished a collaboration with his friend Dr Clive Leslie on a musical called *Black Ice*, and several more archival releases on Trunk are in the works. There's a soundtrack from a mid 60s medical film about mental illnesses called *States Of Mind* – with Parker again among the players – whose discordant string sounds are vaguely reminiscent of Worlds Within Worlds. *Charcoal Sketches* combines rather light jazz with bird calls, with Kirchin playing piano. These are essentially very early studies for what eventually become *Worlds Within Worlds*. Finally, *Abstractions Of The Industrial North* is a library recording from 1965, a jazz piece themed around the decline of industrialisation in the north of England. Meanwhile, Kirchin – who unfortunately is in an advanced stage of a bout with cancer – is very excited about the updated *Worlds Within Worlds*. "You wouldn't believe what I'm doing now," he enthuses. "It's like discovering a new energy source for the planet, like gas or electricity. You must understand, I'm not an arrogant man, but I do feel this music will have the same importance." □ Quantum is out now on Trunk



THE FLYING HEART

Arthur Russell is the great enigma of New York's music scene. A cellist, Buddhist and former music director at the legendary Kitchen, he was seduced by mid-80s disco and produced some of the most enduring underground dance tracks of the age. These, and a previously unreleased cache of his own oceanic, dreamlike solo cello songs, are set to re-emerge this year. David Toop - the only writer ever to interview Russell - speaks to his parents, friends and fellow musicians including Rhys Chatham, Gary Lucas, Peter Zummo and more, to pick up the echoes of a life in music's floating world



Dark Missouri water washes the sniffling edges of the lake. Below the surface, fish run in lines too fast for human drawing. Only sound can follow. Charley is here with his cello, fresh from California, mooching aboard the family sailboat. "Charley, would you write a song for me?" asks a woman on a neighbouring boat. "You can send it to your folks and they'll get it to me." 60 minutes later, at happy hour, he shakes them all – his mother Emily, his father Chuck, the lady who thought song writing was a job of slow deliberation – singing his new composition, "Saga Of The Lake Of The Ozarks".

Now I can watch a Webcam of this same lake, visualise the event through the screen of my computer, watch it move for ward in jerky scenes, broken by gaps and failures, distant, detached, frozen, almost like a true life story.

Charles Arthur Russell II was born in Oskaola, Iowa, on 21 May 1951. Independent to a fault, he resisted family names like Charley, or Little Chucky. Instead, he chose Arthur as his name, which may have run a lesser family bell. His father, Charles Arthur "Chuck" Russell I, died in property insurance. During World War Two, Chuck was a cookman aboard USS 300, a minesweeper. When Arthur was a boy, dad would hand down stories of his escapades at sea, the storms and the calms. "This was meant to fascinate him," Chuck tells me. "I had a record of whole calls and he listened to that a lot. He had many types of sounds of the Staten Island ferry and a working tugboat. He enjoyed coming to Maine in his later years and spent lots of time by the ocean. After he died we scattered his ashes in the Atlantic Ocean off an island in Maine, an island that he had visited and liked."

Now imagine owning a jukebox, a radiant Warbler from the 1950s, built like a spaceship and stocked with records that never fail to cut through deafness and disenchantment. Chief Belier is ready to load, along with John Martyn, Babette Onyiah, Hosie Adams, Rumyanian, Willie Nelson, Fela Kuti, Nikki Drake, JB Lenoir, George Fath, Phil Niblock, Ammy Bo Horne, King Tubby. Then imagine, after a night of smoking, drinking or dreaming, a need to hear all of these artists simultaneously, as if certain qualities in their music were fused into a single sound that refused to be tied to a name. A new name appears on your jukebox: Arthur Russell, singer, musician, composer, songwriter, minimalist, disco auteur, dweller in the world of aco.

Arthur's meekness hanging, weightless and dreamy, a man crooning to himself out in the Iowa sun fields, killer whale deep in the ocean, drifting through the submarine night and cobalt space. Oskaola, "last of the beautiful", a Creek woman, was captured by the Sarmosaks and named Osokola, the Black Dink Singer. In his teens, Arthur threw himself full force against the decent, quiet Quaker heritage of Oskaola, dropped out from school, perhaps striving to be the Black Dink Singer. "We were almost frantic," says Chuck. "He was dabbling in drugs, psychedelic drugs, which really worried us."

Emily, his mother, looks for the cause. "He was kind of ahead of himself." Emily played the cello, "but not well," she says, and there was music in the house: Frank Sinatra, The Modern Jazz Quartet, Ahmad Jamal,

Bessie Smith, Leonard Bernstein and the classics. Arthur took piano lessons from the age of six, then learned cello, taking the bus by himself to Des Moines for classes. In 1968, after the drug problems had subsided, he left Oskaola for San Francisco, joining a Buddhist commune in Haight-Ashbury. "They wouldn't let him play so he played in the closet," says trombonist/composer Peter Zummo, one of Arthur's closest collaborators. Disciples were required to give up all their worldly goods. "He drew the line at his mother's cello," says Chuck.

Too precious to relinquish, the cello lay at the heart of Arthur's music, fluidly rhythmic, lyrical, organic, woozy, ethereal, sometimes eroded by distortion. Arthur Russell was many musicians. In the history of disco-not-disco his various identities as Loose Joints, Dinosaur, Dinosaur R, or Indian Ocean, are revered for 12" singles such as "Go Bang #5", "Kiss Me Again", "Pop Your Funk", "Is It All Over My Face", "Let's Go Swimming", "School Bell/Treasure" and "Was The W". No doubt about it, they are weird, inspiring, utterly original records. He Sold Aretha John Martyn as a rockably boy in the Big Apple, studied in Philip Glass, Indian raga, dub echoes, DMX drums, studio megalomaniac and the secret ceremonies of underground clubs like Gallery, The Loft and Sanctuary.

Then there is introspective Arthur, who recorded the *World Of Echo* album in 1985 and 86, his disco songs and minimalist compositions drawn together in solo performances, some recorded live in Phil Niblock's loft. An air of sadness hangs over these recordings, though they are not oppressive or miserable. Perhaps the melancholy comes with hindsight, since Arthur was to die from AIDS in 1992, long before his unique talent found focus or widespread recognition. On the other hand, what we hear could be contented loneliness, like a man humming to himself in a vast stretch of whitefields, watching the clouds float overhead. "Sometimes he was difficult to talk to," says his mother. "His head was in the clouds."

Both *World Of Echo* and "Let's Go Swimming" were released by Rough Trade in the UK. I spoke to Geoff Travis, who worked long and hard in support of Arthur and his songs. "He completely entranced me as a person," says Travis. "His use of language was fantastic, his love of words. He was from Iowa, which was exotic to an English person. The only other Midwestern person I ever met was Tom Verlaine, who had that same faraway look."

Music Band guitarist Gary Lucas introduced Arthur's music to Travis. "I met Arthur on a recording session in Bearsville," Lucas tells me. "I was co-producer on Peter Gordon's innocent. The big find of that session was Arthur. After having worked with Beefheart, he was the most contrary person I ever met. He went outside the studio door. He said, 'Listening from out here slows it down.'" Moved by the memory, Lucas perceived this partly as a "genius savant" game, partly a technique for finding oblique strategies for making music. In an effort to further Arthur's career, Lucas fixed him a deal at Upside Records, then assigned him the job of producing rapper Mark Sinclair, now better known under the 'nom de action movie' of Vin Diesel.

Trying to fit his smooth rhymes to Arthur's dislocated

beats enraged and frustrated Sinclair.

"It seemed to me as guitarist and mawle of the session," says Lucas, "that the track kept shifting through the auspices of Arthur the crafty contrarian. He had a diabolical streak, did Arthur. It was quite saddening to me that their collaboration ended in mutual frustration, perhaps a bit like the legendary session where Syd Barrett kept modifying his song, 'Have You Got It Yet?', while attempting to teach it to a befuddled Pink Floyd."

Beyond behavioural fits and habit busting, the central issue was his talent. "He was a mawick," says Lucas, "fighting the system yet trying to embrace it. His voice was so warm and spooky and jazzy." Yet that voice, "bittersweet and so emotional" as Lucas further describes it, had been the hidden aspect of his work in the early 1970s. Before his move to New York in 1973, he studied Indian music for two years at Ali Akbar Khan's school in Mann County.

In 1986 I interviewed Arthur for *The Face* magazine. I began by asking about the College. "You know that place?" he asked in a quiet, halting delivery, reserved but at the same time barely hiding a sense of curiosity and sharp wit. "I had gotten interested in the music gradually. I had gravitated towards that place. It brings to mind a lot of people in California. It was very beautiful music. It just attracts me. I played cello while I was there. Cello is one of Ali Akbar Khan's favourite instruments."

There is even a narrator that Arthur performed live with Alice Coltrane during this period. One of Arthur's self-written biographies lists her – "Performances with" – along with Laurie Anderson, poet Jackson MacLow and John Cage. We know for sure that in 1973 he met and befriended Allen Ginsberg, recording with him on tracks now included on the Rhino Records collection, *Holy Soul And Jelly Roll*, playing cello alongside luminaries such as Bob Dylan, clarinetist Perry Robinson and guitarist Happy Traum.

In 1973 he moved to New York. Allen Ginsberg was living in an apartment block on East 12th Street. Arthur visited, meeting composer/musician Elodie Lauton who was staying in Ginsberg's apartment during that year, then moved into the block himself. Arthur had no electricity in his room so Ginsberg ran a power cable out of his window and down the wall so that Arthur could plug in all his equipment. Later, Arthur shared a room in the building with composer Rhys Chatham. I ask Chatham if these domestic convergences had any significance for the culture clashes of rock aesthetics and experimental processes that were emerging during that period. "There were these weird guys who lived in the building who were always dressed in black polyester suits and sunglasses," Chatham writes via email. "I later found out they played in Television. Richard Hell also lived in this building, so rock was in the air in this particular building and was most definitely discussed from time to time."

"At home he would often improvise on his cello through a phase shifter. I loved listening to what he played. It was certainly more pleasant than the shrill live music stuff I was playing on saxophone that he had to put up with. Come to think of it, that may be why Arthur suggested that we get a rehearsal studio."

This page and overtext: Stills from a home video shoot featuring Arthur Russell, early 80s



As Chatham points out, this pre-urban renewal concentration of artists in cheap and abandoned buildings in lower Manhattan and the East Village promulgated a no-holds-bar atmosphere. "We all lived in close proximity to each other," he writes, "and went to the same breakfast places, bars and performance spaces, which consisted of living lofts as well as alternative arts spaces such as The Kitchen. This promoted the sharing of ideas and all manner of cross-experimentation. We were a close family playing in each other's bands. Arthur was a pillar of this scene. There was no sense of alienation until the rents rocketed in New York towards the end of the 80s and we were forced to move away from each other, thus destroying the sense of community we had together."

Names from this distant history flash by like headlights in fog. Ernie Brooks, once bassist with Jonathan Richman And The Modern Lovers and a frequent collaborator with Arthur, tells me of a "dungeon-like rehearsal studio shared with Paul Bley and Evan Lurie". Peter Gordon, Rhys Chatham and Arthur split rent on a rehearsal studio (no doubt the same dungeon) in the basement of Westbeth, where Merce Cunningham lived and worked.

"When, for example," writes Chatham, "Peter Gordon, Laurie Anderson, Arthur Russell, Scott Johnson, Jon Gibson or I wanted to try something out or put on a concert in a loft or whatever, we'd put an ad hoc ensemble together consisting of our composer/performer friends, rehearse the concert and then perform it. Sometimes there was money involved and sometimes there wasn't. Whether we were paid or not, we'd help each other out and in any case were happy to perform."

The Westbeth studio was where Peter Zummo met Arthur. Just out of college and not yet formed, as he puts it, Zummo was tasting the music life of New York prior to moving to the city in 1976. "Peter Gordon was around," he tells me. "Arthur was coming around. I don't remember when he said he wanted to make art music. He always said if the beat was strong enough to make your body move it was written off as art music."

Maybe Zummo, an exceptional improviser with strong analytical tendencies, suited Arthur's ambivalence, his love of playing, his searching intelligence. On the one hand, his trombone featured on the mournful lyricism of Arthur's instrumentals, recorded live at The Kitchen in 1977 and 78; on the other hand he plays the intro – blowing like Don Drummond in orbit – on Arthur's dub-jazz-funkiest-noise-psychédélic-disco masterpiece, "Go Bang!", released in 1983 on Sleeping Bag, the company co-founded by Arthur and Will Soool.

"I was improvising serial music, trying not to fall back on habit," says Zummo. "Arthur called it my chromatic style." After moving to New York, Zummo studied with trombonist Roswell Rudd, "an abstract, intervallic approach to chromatic improvisation", plus he worked with Arthur. "That work was a laboratory for pursuing these ideas and approaches," he says. To listen intently to all of Arthur's compositions, one after the other – songs, dance tracks, compositions, sketches – is to gain a slow, clear realisation of the links across his music. A bassline from "Go Bang!" echoes the synchronised melodic mania of a live





performance of 24-24 Music. No style is higher or lower, hermaphrodite of impermeable.

"I like music, traditional music and pop music in a very direct way," Arthur told me in 1986, "whereas electronic composers tend to see it as throwaway." In the first half of the 1970s, Arthur composed songs. In 1974 he met Ernie Brooks after Brooks had played in one of the last concerts by The Modern Lovers. Later he visited Ernie at his home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and played him some of these songs. Ernie remembers titles: "The Ballad Of The Lights", "Your Sister Knows The Saddest People". To me, they sound like the titles of Country songs, dark blue Faron Young or Roy Pross melancholia you might have heard in a honky tonk, long ago. "They were kinda folkie," Brooks tells me. "When I first met him, you felt like he came from Oklahoma. He had that being."

Together they formed The Flying Hearts, the beginning of another convoluted musical relationship which finished, as far as bands were concerned, on the way to a gig in Washington. "Just as we were approaching the Holland Tunnel," says Brooks, "he decided he didn't want to go so he picked up his cello and got out." For a while, The Flying Hearts were courted by John Hammond Sr at CBS. "He took us in the studio at 52nd Street several times," says Brooks, still awed to have been recorded by the man who played such a pivotal role in the careers of Billie Holiday, Charlie Christian, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen. "I can still remember John Hammond's voice saying, 'Arthur, that was wonderful.'" Then Hammond was set aside by CBS; another opening closes.

As musical director of The Kitchen performance space between 1974 and 75, Arthur performed with John Cage and Christian Wolff during this time. Philip Glass was so impressed by his playing that he wrote a part for him to play in the Mabou Mines production of *Gasconade* at the Public Theatre. At one point he came close to becoming a member of Talking Heads. The potential to make it, which Arthur seemed to desire at some level, was tantalizingly present.

"Since January of 1975 I have been working on music designed specially for a series of colour slides by Yuko Nonomura," Arthur wrote in a programme note. "I was awakened, or re-awakened to the bright sound and magical qualities of the bubblegum and easy-listening currents in American popular music. Since in most popular music a lyric is the focus of a song, and since in popular music a song without words, in order to be a commercial success, must have a special quality of its own, and since the music for the colour slides was not structured on speech patterns, I ended up calling the piece *Instrumentals*."

Speaking to me in 1986 he joked about this composition. "It was performed in a variety of instrumentations," he said. "The instrumentation could vary from one concert to another but the basic core music would be the same but arranged differently. I spent most of my time working on that one piece. If it was all performed completely it would be 48 hours long. I decided I would do that for the rest of my life." He laughs. "But then I didn't do that. I would like to do that piece again. It's just that when you're a composer and you do the same piece over

and over, people get tired."

In 1984, a recording of *Instrumentals* was released on Another Side, a subsidiary of the Belgian label, Les Disques Du Cercleulcule. The same label also released compositions by Gavin Bryers. Clearly a parallel could be drawn between the populist sensibilities of British minimalism and Arthur's seriously non-serious approach.

Rhys Chatham felt puzzled by Arthur's use of harmonic material, his magical bubblegum. "Arthur was working with chord changes," he writes, "I believe they were 10/11/12 type changes if my memory serves. While changes following this pattern were of course the basis of all standard music (popular songs from the 30s and 40s, which were later co-opted by bebop composers and improvisors), Arthur's approach to them, which is to say the way he strung them together, was unique to him and at first struck us, or at least it did me, as rather odd. I was wrong, and didn't fully appreciate it until after Arthur's death, when I played the same piece at a memorial concert for Arthur at the World Financial Centre in 1993."

Others were less prepared to admit their errors. Low art versus high art; high versus low: none of it made any sense. "The first *Instrumentals* piece had drums," Arthur told me. "I remember I set up the drum set at The Kitchen. A lot of people turned off. They thought it was a sign of increasing unsophistication and commercialism. Maybe I am eccentric. It's basically a very simple idea. I guess the simpler the idea the harder it is to explain."

A hard question comes up in our conversation: how did you get from Ali Akbar Khan, John Cage and the downtown art music scene to dance records? Arthur has a simple answer. "I went to a disco one night," he says, amused by the ridiculousness of this major transition. "It made a big impression on me. It was Gallery. Nicky Siano was the DJ."

Despite its importance in popular music history, nostalgia, neglect and misinformation have distorted the disco story beyond recognition. Turn to Tim Lawrence's forthcoming book, *Love Saves The Day*, however, and the origins of disco supply an opening through which a reserved, complex and idealistic musician like Arthur could enter. Lawrence sets New York dance club pioneer David Mancuso firmly within 1960s counterculture. Mancuso treated members of his club, The Loft, as house guests, offering them free food and juice, an inclusive, egalitarian door policy, the best possible sound system and a musical trajectory that was uplifting and unpredictable. "Imagine hearing your record on one of those systems," says Geoff Travis.

Constant improvements to The Loft sound system were based on deep listening, with influences coming from sources familiar to Arthur Russell. A Ravi Shankar concert at Lincoln Center inspired Mancuso to change the loudspeaker setup, then at the Blue Hole near Mount Tremper, 12 miles from Woodstock, he experienced an epiphany from listening to rock. "The sound was incredible," he told Lawrence. "It was the clearest sound I had ever heard, and there was all this information."

"Arthur used to come to the Gallery," Nicky Siano

"SOMETIMES HE WAS DIFFICULT TO TALK TO... HIS HEAD WAS IN THE CLOUDS"

tells Lawrence, "We used to make fun of him because he danced in a really strange way." More extrovert and flamboyant than Mancuso, Siano was known as the king of the New York Dis. Deeply impressed by this scene he had discovered, Arthur suggested they record together. The result, "Kiss Me Again", was released on Sire in November 1978 under the name of Dinosaur, featuring David Byrne on guitar and Arthur on cello. Siano claims that the record was never pushed, yet still "ended up selling some ugly amount, like 200,000."

Arthur also met the late Steve D'Acquisto at Gallery. Never in the top tier as a DJ, D'Acquisto was important to the insular politics of New York disco.

Again, Arthur spotted an opportunity and collaborated with D'Acquisto on "Is It All Over My Face", released under the name of Loose Joints on West End in 1980. In the same year he released "Pop Your Funk". Whereas "Is It All Over My Face" was an exercise in disco xerox, from its double entendre title to The Ingram Brothers' bass octaves, bumping drums and scratch guitar, "Pop Your Funk" was quite another creature. The 12" opens with Arthur's bone hard, atomised cello riffs, disrupted by bursts of spinistered guitar from David Byrne. Whispered lyrics – "Pop that funk, yeah, get it baby, don't you feel it" – give a surreal twist to perfunctory "Spunk" style disco vocals. The 7" version could be one of the craziest 45s ever released, just under three minutes of manic bass drum and ride cymbal overlaid with primitive synthesizer glosses and Merzbow type noise, all recorded on cassette.

In the late 1970s, Mustafa Ahmed was recording in Downtown Sound on Christopher Street. A professional social worker who had counselled Afrika Bambaataa back in the days when Bam was still Black Spades gang member Lance Taylor, Ahmed had played percussion on James Mason's jazz fusion classic, *Rhythm Of Life*. Maybe the session was for this record; Ahmed recalls drummer Michael Norada Walden being there, Arthur Russell walked in, and from this chance meeting a friendship and musical relationship developed that lasted until Arthur's death. "What I remember," Ahmed tells me, "is always going to Arthur's apartment. Arthur was fascinated by HipHop. At his place on 12th Street we used to watch Video Jukebox, before cable, analysing The Sugarhill Gang."

As a boy, Ahmed had seen *The Gene Krupa Story* and felt his life moving towards the drums. Living in the Bronx he heard Latin music, salsa, corgies, later heard Olutari and delved deeper into what he calls "the black cultural experience". Now here he was, working with a strange gay white man from Iowa. "I didn't know he was gay for about five or six years," says Ahmed. "He was one of the first white folk I ever had an intimate relationship with, I was a black straight male who felt comfortable working with gay men. There was something about Arthur's innocence that penetrated that veneer of being from the South Bronx, changing my name to Mustafa and being very pan-African. There are very few people comfortable in that space."

Ahmed played percussion on some of Arthur's most enduring, still surprising records: entrancing singles like "Schoolbell/Treehouse", "Let's Go Swimming"

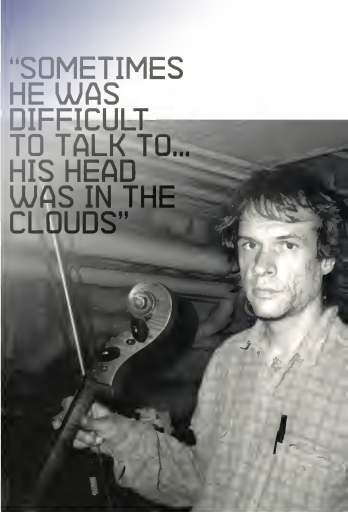




PHOTO: TOM LEE (L); ARTIST: CHRISTOPHER GRIFFIN (R); ARTIST: ROBERT WILSON (BOTTOM)

and the epic "In The Light Of The Miracle". Drum machine, congas, electric piano, trombone, cello, voice; simple elements, yet like nothing in the history of disco, as fluid as a sarangi solo by Rannaryan, as compulsively funky as Fela Kuti, as earthbound and elevated as Robert Wyatt. "Let's Go Swimming", in particular, is extraordinary, blazing with weird energy, simultaneously weightless and fierce. The structural shifts are utterly unpredictable, thanks to mixes by the late Walter Gibbons. Increasingly interested in the studio as an instrument and using multi-tracks as a labyrinthine puzzle, Arthur always tried to record on the night of a full moon. Gary Lucas remembers the mix session. "Arthur had work tapes that he'd do at Battery Sound, down by the World Trade Center," Lucas says. "We decided 'Let's Go Swimming' was the one. The session was ironic. Arthur was tearing his hair out and Walter was serene, snapping tape. There must have been method in his madness."

Arthur had this to say about the record: "Some DIs said that nobody would ever, ever play that. I think eventually that kind of thing will be commonplace. I was pleased that Walter did something very different. After doing all those Salsoul records he can have a very closed aesthetic. A lot of DIs try to make them into something more ordinary."

Arthur's life as an experimental composer was not unfolding smoothly. A collaboration with Robert Wilson on *Medea*, performed once in 1981 at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, could have made his name. Instead, the project foundered on a clash of egos and Arthur's inability to function in this pressurised environment. "If somebody said they liked something then he immediately became suspicious," says Ernie Brooks.

"I've gone through the correspondence between Arthur and Robert," says Steve Krutson, compiler of a remarkable new collection of unreleased Arthur Russell songs for his Audible label. "It begins with a very personal, mushy note from Robert, followed by pleas from Robert's assistant to Arthur to get it done, to a heart-breaking note from Arthur to Robert after the collaboration ground to a halt. I'm unsure if the note was ever sent but it describes a dream that Arthur had where he makes up with Robert and they remain friends."

In 1978 Tom Lee was coming home from a club. For a few weeks he had seen the same intriguing man on the streets around St Mark's Place. This time, mystery man was buying an ice cream cone at a news stand and Lee decided to say hello. The next time, he was talking on a public telephone. They spoke, he asked the person on the other end of the line to take down Tom's number. Soon after, they met and Tom realised he wanted to be with this person, Arthur Russell.

"At that time I was going out with a woman," Tom tells me. "I didn't know he was gay. Going to discos was very painful. It took me a while to come out. If Jackson Browne had been the music of the gay community I would have been out in a heartbeat. One of my first dates was going to see Talking Heads and The B-52s in Central Park. We didn't move in together for another two years." Arthur had been a practising Buddhist since his California days. Sometimes Tom

would come home to find the apartment door open and Arthur chanting in his meditation space. Money was scarce. "Arthur truly felt he would make it," says Tom. "He dabbled in working. It's almost like his job was to get up and put on headphones and work on his tapes."

Occasionally, Arthur would call home to ask his father for money. "I would be cringing," says Tom. "No, you can't ask for more money." Yet Chuck and Emily were endlessly patient with their difficult son. "If he needed money he knew when to call," says Chuck. "I would send it by mail and write him a letter and I would want to know what he did with it."

Arthur worked until 1986 to tell his parents he was gay. Both of them heard the news individually, both dying at the time, which serves a good example of why people found Arthur so infuriating and enduring. "One of the first things I said was, 'How you had a test for AIDS?'" says Emily. "He said, 'No, I don't want to.'"

Arthur was diagnosed with HIV that same year. He continued to perform, both solo and with Zummro, Ahmed and Elodie Lauten as The Singing Tractors. He also worked on new songs, toiling at the album that Geoff Travis had commissioned and patiently awaited, never quite finishing anything in case completion signified a greater finality. "As long as things have an element of confusion or blurring then you can imagine them in a perfect state," says Ernie Brooks.

"For two or three years he was going to discos," says Tom. "When he had gigs, people were used to him being disorganised. It wasn't like he was putting up a red flag. He impressively looked after himself." Elodie Lauten's album of musical settings for Allen Ginsberg poems, *Waking in New York*, contains the following lines about Arthur, taken from Ginsberg's *The Changelin Ground*:

"... while the artistic Buddhist composer on sixth floor lay spaced out feet swollen with water, dying slowly of AIDS over a year."

"The last time we saw him in New York, his hair was falling out," says his father, Chuck. "When he was little he had a temper and I used to say, 'Charley, you're a poor sport'. In the hospital I was combing his hair and I said, 'Charley, you're a good sport'. He said, 'Are you sure?' Two days after he died we got a letter from a cousin of mine with a write-up about Arthur from *The New York Times*. We said, this kid was well thought of."

"He was the first friend I ever had who died," says Mustafa Ahmed. "It was uncomfortable but the man I am today was shaped by that. There was such grace in his passing."

Arthur Russell died on 4 April 1992. I like to think of an odd little remark he made during our conversation – "I always thought music with no drums was successive to music with drums. It's future music. In outer space you can't take your drums, you take your mind" – and imagine Arthur humming soundlessly in outer space, over the confetti, through the ocean, let's go swimming. ◻ The World Of Arthur Russell (Soul Jazz) and Calling Out Of Context (Audible), a collection of unreleased solo tracks, are released next month. Audible are preparing an expanded, remastered version of *World Of Echo* to appear next summer, followed by further material from Russell's archive

50 RECORDS OF THE YEAR

Robert Wyatt CuckooLand (Hannibal)
David Sylvian Bleemish (Sarnadhi Sound)
John Fahey + (Ravenous)
Nurse With Wound Salt Marie Celeste (United Dames)
Chris Watson Weather Report (Touch)
Rhythm & Sound With The Artists (Bunzl Mix/Indigo)
Dizzee Rascal Boy In Da Corner (XL)
Four Tet Rounds (Domino)
Keith Rowe & John Tilbury Duos For Doris (Firstwhile)
The Bug Pressure (Rephlex)
Cat Power You Are Free (Matador)
So So (Thrill Jockey)
Lightning Bolt Wonderful Rainbow (Load)
Angels Of Light Everything Is Good Here/Please Come Home (Young God)
Pandit Pran Nath Midnight (Just Dreams)
Limescale Limescale (Incus)
Diamanda Galas Defileones, Will And Testament (Mute)
Kraftwerk Tour De France Soundtracks (EMI)
Broadcast Haha Sound (Warp)
Matmos The Civil War (Matador)
Outkast Speakerbox/Love Below (Arista)
Laibach WAT (Mute)
Colleen Everyone Alive Wants Answers (Load)
Kaffe Matthews cd rbb + b3 (Annetneworks)
Henry Flynt New American Ethnic Music Vol 3: Hilibilly Tape Music (Recorded)
Jaga Jazzist The Six (Ninja Tune)
Fennesz Live In Japan (Headz)
Leafcutter John The Housebound Spirit (Planet Mu)
Sunburned Hand Of The Man The Trickle-Down Theory Of Lord Knows What (Solipsa)
Basil Kirchin Quantum: A Journey Through Sound In Two Parts (Tuniki)
John Wall Hylis (Utterposalm)
Diamanda Galas La Serpenta Canto (Mute)
Sightings Absolutes (Load)
Peaches Fatherfucker (XL)
Robert Wyatt Solar Flares Burn For You (Cuseiform)
Shirley Collins Within Sound (Fledg'ing)
Aki Onda Bon Voyage! (Cassette Memories Vol 2) (Improvised Music From Japan)
Miles Davis The Complete Jack Johnson Sessions (Columbia Legacy)
Monade Socialismo Ou Barbarie: The Bedroom Recordings (Duophonos Super 45s)
Pluramon Dreams Top Rock (Karaoke Ka!k)
Alasdair Roberts Farewell Sorrow (Rough Trade)
Sketch Show Tronka (Daisyworld)
Jimmy Lyons The Box Set (Ayler)
The Silver Mt Zion Memorial Orchestra & The Tra-La-La Band With Choir
 This Is Our Punk-Rock, These Rusted Satellites Gather And Sing (Constellation)
Michael Schumacher Room Pieces (XL)
Phil Niblock Touch Food (Touch)
SunnO))) White 1 (Southern Lord)
Yasunao Tone Yasunao Tone (Asphodel)
Bonnie 'Prince' Billy Master And Everyone (Domino)
Noxagt Turning It Down Since 2001 (Load)

2003 REWIND



In our 12 page review of 2003, we present the top 50 records of the year, and the winning releases in each genre as voted for by our team of writers and critics, who also offer their personal Pros & Cons. Plus, a selection of this year's high-ranking musicians deliver their verdicts on the past 12 months

Robert Wyatt

Cuckooland
(Hannibal)

With his last release since 1997's Wire winner *Sbraga*, Old Rottenhat did it again with this letterboxed portfolio of jazz-inflected songs (in his self-styled "wind's mutter") that ranged from an evocation of Miles Davis and Juliette Gréco's 1940s love affair to jokers at Western foreign policy in the Middle East. We said: "Sbraga nailed the bar high, but Cuckooland is a substantial and deeply personal work, with the light touch of a true master!" (September/2008)



Mike Barnes

Prose: Another Demo 15 February. Masses of great music. The Magic Beard at Shephard's Bush Empire, Legit weekend at the Barbican, seeing Hubert Sumlin with Tompaine. Subtitled stint at The Wire...no, really, I mean it. And if I don't get any more work, the readership will soon know what really gets played in the office. Playing more drums again and recording. Best day of the year, epicurean 14 mile walk along the coast from Hops to Salisbury, Devon, 4 June. Second best: interviewing Robert Wyatt and Alfredo Benghe live in the studio on *Something The Surface*, Resonance 10-14 FM.

Cons: What the Anti-war Demo failed to stop. Recurring back trouble. My book *Capitol Bother* going out of print. Broadsheet newspapers desperately trying to be hip. Vicious obsession with style and celebrity. The novel is too personal or trivial, so let's be positive and leave it there.

Clive Bell

Prose: One of the year's most vivid auditory moments came in the unusual form of an audio walk from Leyton to Waltham in East London. Set up by composer Graeme Miles, you don't headphones and walk while listening to tales of local life, and the impact of building the M11 motorway—Miles's house was one of those demolished. Surprisingly affecting, this invisible artwork is up there any time you want to participate! www.lakeland11.net. Visiting the Off Site venue in Tokyo was glimpsing the tip of a glimmering iceberg of new Japanese improvisation. Also in Tokyo, I worked alongside Complicité's theatre sound designer Chris Shutt as he wrestled into existence the fantastically complex sound design for *The Elephant Vanishes* stage show. Shutt is a master of a little acknowledged audio artform, and it was fascinating, not to mention hilarious, to observe him from close-up.

Cons: Disappointment at White Hart Lane as Spurs hero Glenn Hoddle flattered to deceive. And maybe I should see a counsellor, but no, even the thumb-twiddling miracle of texting doesn't make a mobile phone essential.

Ben Borthwick

Prose: Looking on the bright side, the war getting 1.5m on the streets, global warming giving us hot British summers and domestic life flying winds, memories of Squarespace's performance at Soma's London night getting me through the Barcelona festival. Black Dice's incredible set eliminating irritation at 3G phone abuse (live streaming to your m8 is SO the new lighter in the arse), overcrowded tubes lead to Space Hijacking the Circle Line for a truly underground party. Jennifer Stenmark's hellacious organic prose and intimate alienation in Krut Audin's film *Fifty City* at Istanbul Biennale. Live: Add N to (X)'s last gig, Animal Collective's virtuosity, SunOJ's pure camp noise shamanism, Matt Herbert's Big Band exploring convictions and reminding us of ancapism. Pink Gaseous enacting my fantasy Stooges gig. Reading Mark Danielewski's *House Of Leaves* and Gregory Maguire's *Wicked*. Outkast's *House 3000*, the most shamanic soulmate of 2003.

Cons: The "special relationship".

Philip Clark

Prose: A year where CDs dropped through the letterbox in ever increasing numbers, therefore the courage of Freixes's *This Church* and Schoeyner's *Pleno Solo II* in challenging preconceived notions of new music about our life a beacon. Also a year of heavy duty, inspiring interviews—Glenn Coates, Jim Hall, Mauricio Kagel (I got well, sorry), Perry Robinson, Jay McSherry, Evil Dick and the Barred Members at Royal College of Art, Bruce Forsyth presenting *Have I Got News For You*—didn't he do well? Dave Brubeck 2003 tour of the UK, Sir Fast Under Fuchsia Reinke solo concert at the Purcell Room, Bridget Riley at Tate Britain and LS Lowry retrospective at Sunderland Art Gallery.

Cons: Continual erosion of our broadcast media and the assumption that arts have no place therein. Finally saw *AI*—what was Spielberg thinking? Ask Anthony Turnage festival at Barbican—done for all the wrong reasons, Barry Carter RIP.

Mia Clarke

Prose: Taking long walks in the Sussex countryside, enjoying live shows from Cat On Form, Fugate, Broadcast, and British Sea Power, playing a show on the Queen Mary at All Tomorrow's Parties in LA, interviewing Bill Calahan, the incredible Blasquart exhibition at Musée Mollat in Paris, *The Last Great Wilderness* by The Pastels, beautiful Philip Glass opera at Prague National Theatre, the kindness of strangers, swimming in the sea near my home during summerholidays, recording at Electrical Audio, Illinois, Gaseous Talk Costa Lives, Jim Sando's & Michael Farley's experimental acoustic guitar anthology, Tensei, bike riding and camping in spring; while not aware from the Terminal Outposts. Cons: The passing away of Nina Simone.

Julian Cowley

Prose: Lengthy, fascinating, disparate conversations with Eddie Prevost, Hedge Stern, Anne Nordheim and "Blue" Gene Tyranny. Exploring Oslo for the first time in beautiful weather. Revisiting the extraordinary work of poet/center/follower/poetist Kenneth Patchen, in anticipation of a forthcoming revision of his *Followings* recordings, including an album of excerpts from his potent and all too relevant anti-war novel *The Journal Of Albert Moonlight*. Stringers in *The People Band* arrives...

Cons: All too obvious and far too serious for further comment here.



David Sylvian

Blamish
(Sarnadhi Sound)

Sylvian's first studio album since 1999's *Dead Bees On A Cake*, *Blamish* was also the last release on his own Sarnadhi Sound label. While sticking to melody and voice as main elements, collaborations with Denis Bailey and Christian Fennest make *Blamish* come alive with noisy guitar splatters and romantic electronic swallows. We said: "A record of a poet when caution is a paper boat to be thrown into the sea... rising beyond all expectations." *Voice shedding a skin* (June/22)

Christoph Cox

Post: Music: nothing mindblowingly new, but good music all over the place; WMUA and college radio-autonomous zones on Clear Channel's landscape; the Eristhale label captures some of the most exciting music on the planet. Visual art: Thomas Struth at the MCA Chicago; James Turrell at Seattle's Henry Art Gallery; Dance: Grupo Corpo in *Amant*; Politics: *NowOn.org*; Democracy Now; the US left shows signs of energy and revival. Life like *Angelus* Biko joins our wild and raucous household. Cons: Forward march of Bush's fascist cabal; Israel apartheid becomes ever more brutal and blatant; death of Edward Said; too little time for all the year's great music, art, and film.

Phil England

Post: Robin Cook, George Galloway, Michael Meacher, Resonance FM, Club Anti-Apathy, Rising Tide Network, congestion charging, London Improwers' Orchestra, The Kinkor, Cynical Lax, Baku-Geyhan campaign, Hubert Sumlin's birthday at the Spirit with Elliott Sharp's Tompkins, Burning Planet, *unelocize* Bush music, the ninky-dink pedal-powered PA, big power UK network, *Isola*, Mark Curtis' *Web Of Deceit* (Winlog), The Fire This Time (www.thisfirethistime.org) - the best record of last year and this year too. The world's poor start to fight back at the WTO in Cancun.

Louise Gray

Post: Robert Wilson's *Aids* (the quality of light), Franco B at Tate Modern (the quality of silence); Bohanes, Kikran & Kowczyk's *O Mensch!* (the quantity of emotional), Nick Cave at Hammersmith, Throwing Muses and Electrelife at the Astoria (the quality of noise); Glyn Kitchell, Bush and Inber (the persistence of hope); becoming a Future Bitch Heroine (one night only); Sidel's Endless (issued last time), Susanna And The Magical Orchestra (looking forward too). Cons: "Hesitant can't exist without hell. It's one world... it's one concert" (RW).

JOHN FAHEY



John Fahey

+ (Reverent)

On the last record John Fahey recorded before his untimely death in February 2001, his ghostly fingerpicking guitar lines stretched the blues into a Buddhist mantra. We said: "The line between the devil's music of the blues and the sanctified spiritual was always thin, and on - Fahey has found yet another way to make the very profane truly profound." (January/22)

Richard Henderson

Post: Wonderful performances from both Television and - beyond all reason - Iggy and the (mostly) original Stooges playing the folk songs of my native land. Dinner with Terry Riley, Stefano Boccardo-Lobo & Tom Welsh on the upper deck of the Queen Mary. Lucia's *Yo-Yo* in downtown Los Angeles, masked Mexican wrestlers, strippers and rags on episode, simultaneously. An evening at home with The Cramps, Chris Watson's *Weather Report* being sufficient reason to replace my prom's tubes. Of course, solvency, however brief-lived, and invaluable support from my family and friends. Electrocute's "I Love My Daddy" and Nell, the daughter I could get with a copy card. The life of a digital migrant worker, too much time spent away from my family. Despatch George W. don't trust Michael Moore either. Neil Young's *World* isn't on DVD. August Durrell, where are you? RIP. Daphne Oram (the voice of the Tardis), Fred McFeely Rogers, George Firth, Prince Bryant, Little Eva, Channing, Skip Dutton, Sheila Woolley, Moley Finn, Lou Harrison, Gills Cruz, Dewey Terry, Robert Palmer, Lucia, Pamela, Sylvester Randahorn, Tru Ruanen-araz, Paul Burkson, Romme Dawson, Claude Truener, Sister Mary Ignacius, Randy Segundo, Speedy West, Tony Thompson, Teddy Randazzo and, most sadly, Mr and Mrs Cash.

Rahma Khazani

Post: The increasingly frequent encounters between contemporary electronics and acoustic music: this past year I saw Pagan performed with Erik M and Scanner, while the GRM staged a collaborative work by Christian Zanted, Christian Fennest and Mika Vento. APOSS, the Nanten-bent musicists', artists' and producers' collective who are revitalizing the French experimental music scene. The Paris City Outdoors Festival, which featured music and installations on the theme of outer space, as well as a symposium on the experience of weightlessness and its impact on the creative process! In a more earthbound vein, the first edition of this London SummerFest was one of the high spots of a long, hot summer. Cons: As usual, too many uninspiring recordings/events/exhibitions.



Nurse With Wound

Salt Marie Celeste
(United Dances)

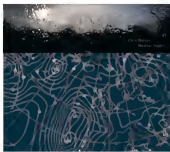
Taking its cues from the surrealist, Steven Soderbergh's back catalogue bejewels with elements of the bizarre and esoteric. In his own words, this album is "The sound of a melancholy ghost out of the ocean creaking away with no one there. And at the end of the album it sinks." We said: "Salt Marie Celeste renders itself not only as an epic piece of electroacoustic minimalism, but also as a stirring sermon of our own petty squabbles in the face of nature's insurmountable force." (May/21)

Alan Licht

Post: As usual, it's a lot easier for me to remember good shows of the past year than good records, so... Lightning Bolt's breathless set night after night at the Empty Bottle and right after Sonic Youth at Irving Plaza. Stooges at Jones Beach and Rockat from the Tomb at the Village Underground (two amazing shows by bands I would never, ever get to see live), Luc Fennel & DJ Olive at the Kitchen, Suprême Indifference at Issue (surround-sound at its best), Even Pater/Paul Lythe/Mex Von Schöppelbach live at Tonic, Major Stars at the Old Office (the thirtysomething progenitors of Boston's Twisted Village rock ten times harder than the Stooges, believe it, rock hard as enactment of fantasy rather than rock 'n' roll's accessory), Paul's nine-foot high colour field painting by Ron Mueck's *Concave* which now adorns my bedroom, Kim Gordon & Jutta Koether's *Club in the Shadow* exhibition/performance series, the Blackout of 2003 (an invigorating change of pace). Cons: The Bush administration, Operation Igloo Freedom, touring musicians boycotting the US, Disappointments: the new *Lost Bangs* book (lousy title, horrible design, and mostly pieces I was already familiar with), the official Dylan-Rolling Thunder Live 1975 CD (buy the bootlegs instead). The closing of Anonymous Records (an excellent mid order source in Seattle) and See Hear (a once-definitive music zine/bookstore in the East Village) - more evidence of the shrinking margins for alternative culture in the new decade. The loss of Summer Camp.

Dave Mendel

Post: Becoming a father. Miraculous cures: *Soothing Sounds For Baby* (Raymond Scott), *Danger Man* on DVD, Jack Casady's acoustics being played on *After Bathing At Baxter's* (reissue Jefferson Airplane). Open Source software movement becoming unstoppable. Mac OS X. Digital cameras. Brooklyn's best brewery. Two Little Red Hens. Extended unemployment. Cons: United States economy, environment, cult libraries trashed by psychopaths and crooks. Death of comic genius Art Garney (The Montymenors). Extended unemployment.



Chris Watson

Weather Report
(Touch)

The Cabinet Voltaire founder and expert sound recordist artfully deployed his vivid field recordings as tiny dramas about about the impact of extreme weather on natural habitats. We said: "Weather Report offers... a travelogue through a subtle, but certainly noticeable collocation of materials... the difficulty in this uniform emerges in his choices, and here Watson's are impeccable." (September/2016)

Rhythm & Sound w/ the artists



Rhythm & Sound

With The Artists
(Bunzl/Mulholland)

Both dubmentors Mark Ernestus and Moritz Von Oswald came down from the mountain with a new set of stone (stone) tablets, featuring eight different singers. We said: "Ernestus and Von Oswald's dubble channel operates around a central core of awe; much dank as reverent medium, elemental tablet, atom heart monitor, some: cygne." (October/2016)



Dizzee Rascal

Boy In Da Corner
(XL)

The veed 19 year old South Londoner's debut was widely heralded as a breakthrough for UK urban music. We said: "Angry, witty and bearing new surprises with every bar, the album delivers both lyrically and sonically... Dizzee isn't so much assuming his place in the circle as light as blowing out the hologram one by one." (August/2014)

Phrog Masters

Post Shows: Sonic Youth's Brakage tribute in NYC; Paul Flaherty and Chris Corsano deconstruct 611 Florida Avenue in Washington DC; The Fall, Mission of Burma, Dirty Three with Zei Solly, and Animal Collective in DC; Alan Sparhawk and If Thousands in Baltimore; Koyote Quartet under the planes at Arlington National Cemetery; Alan Licht reading and expanding at DCCC; Movies: By Brooklyn Criterion DVD; Thomas Rindholm's Rivers and Tides, Berman and Paloma's American Splendor, Thomas McCarthy's The Sitter; Agent, Jeff Kunk's Hater's Hat, finally finding Arthur Bradford's Hawk's Year News on cable. Other: Being Mark bold in a one-shot Plummer cover band; Talking to Jeff Kunk, Animal Collective, Fawn Erata, and Emily; Listening to Jeff Kunk. Core: The death of Ben Brakage.

Jerome Mounsell

Post: Michael Rieblum's Zimbabwe's Countdown documentary at ZITF (Zanzibar International Film Festival); living in Dar es Salaam; lions, birds and wildebeest in the Ngongoro crater; beachfront, the sea, coming back to London in the middle of the heathens; vast alone; Enriquez Meléndez at the Photographers Gallery; being out of range of British TV; countless Tanzanian greetings; Tingitanga paintings; Mkuu; page, Stone Town; Markus Papp & Enio Topola's So CD; Swahili Mkuu; the heavy melody of Lorn Cameron; Prince Lightning's The Long Scratch; Tomer's Scauder; reading Nyzard Kapucian's Another Day of Life; WM Sebald's The Rings Of Saturn; Shira Nappud's North Of South; Geoff Dyer's Play For People Who Can't Be Bored; Dr Dr Dr Alexander Harnett's Nowhere Here; reading: DeLia's White Noise; seeing (but not climbing) Table Mountain and Kilimanjaro. Core: Personal and technological communication breakdowns, insecurities; the Flying Horse; touting down in Heathrow the day the tennis moved in; economic conundrums in Tanzania; security threats; computer-flying power surges; plane flights; power cuts; potholes, politics; missing people.

Brian Morton

Post: Merging Sarah, Gavin Bryars's present of a new piece for our wedding, leaving the BBC; living in the country and getting my hands dirty again; Alex's handwriting debut with The Morton Mums; a new mudpuppy; the OED off of it out on my workbench at last; really reading and writing again; really, really listening again; too many books to name; sparrowhawk, jays, herons, eels, mergansers, grey seals, Sarah's photographs, total, overwhelming (and possibly sick making) love. Core: Listening to the BBC; lawyers; client, our crash; flu; hospital; resolute beat of cosmic pessimism; ghosts at the wedding; Vietnam-on-Tigres; not seeing the girls much; Michael's love, usual state of jobworth and number-crunching, wishing we were 19 and 30 respectively.

Tom Perchard

Post: Club Ben Watson at Teatro Technos was fun and Tes at the Bunko changed; but what really did it was just climbing out from under London's muffled coigan and scrambling where you can glimpse the big white bear in hibernation. 2003's good bands: Hatchedhead, Amulandam Tacuma, James G Spady, wonderful Improv band The World Book. I took bandy with Rocio Meneses and Jane Austen back at the London and forgot I was still surrounded by PAVGA Woods. Core: Enough hand-wringing, there's a bear in our own garden, fences don't keep him out (and it is a hen, Wise readers). To our discredit: we hitch up backpacks and stride off with drier people quite like ourselves rather than getting in better, bigger-prime sunbaths to bag the hygge.

Most Reviews

Post: Push Button Objects, Celeste Fraser Delgado, the beautiful women of South Beach, Schematic, Induce, grited pearsen, I/O in Miami, Ray Wietzenberg, Female Fun Records, Roder: Warm at BED during WWG, free CDs, the Weather's debut album, Prefuse 73/Saveth and Savolite, Mosaic, Induce 3000's "Shin Lives in My Lap", ion cream and root beer, discovering electro-bass, Pole and Fat Jon, Sight and Sound installations, King Goodwin's "Monster Zine", B.I.P.'s verse on "We're Famous", Frank Roth, Gheely International, Dudley Perkins' "Lost", Beone. Core: Taco Bell, the beautiful women of South Beach, Barcade in South Beach, no decent record store in Miami, being afraid to go out because I don't drive well, Benzo, Farnsworth (as in "farnsworth"), women breaking my heart for the hell of it, whistling of underground hip-hop, U.S. invading Iraq and prying England behind guys, mud wrestling, these under-rockers Rustel Service and Straight Nines, major labels, canonizing Tupac Shakur, knockdowns on Collins Avenue.)

Jim Haynes

Post: Steven Shapiro not only produced his best Nurse With Wound record in years with: Bell Me Gelfand, but also granted me the opportunity to have dinner with him during his first trip to California. My aunt and my mother were certainly killed to hear of this evening, as I had sent them on a wild goose chase to London record stores looking for some new WWN record during a trip to England. Imagine two American middle aged women asking Nick at Intemas for Nurse With Wound, and a family joke began to take root. Around the same time, I had the fortune to also witness the beauty of Current 88 live. Loren Chesed and I (aka Coelacanth) had wonderful time impressing four hours with Mimos at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. We were exhausted and Mimos had 90 more hours to go. Joanne and I entertained Siegfried, Ben Sigmenow and Mark Waldron at the Boardwalk in Santa Cruz for a beautiful day with beautiful people. My Magnetic North installation arrived in San Jose and Newville, and later, Helen Scandale published the soundtrack to the work. Thanks to you all. Core: On the Epistle, Anonymous Distribution closed, leaving a huge void in the market for experimental music and sound art in North America that has yet to be filled. The effects of the terrible economy have hit way too close to home. I failed Andrew Muckenlin. The only reliable political analyst in the US media is Jon Stewart, how sad is that.



Four Tet Rounds (Domino)

The prolific Kerin Holden outwitted a hybrid world waiting for grafting warm tones onto thorny beats, and branching out into an electronics that's not so much about the future, but about the emotional here and now. We said: "Rounds is shot through with an elemental tension, reconciling between the demands of experimentation and a conventional, intimate intimacy... At the same time nothing here sounds like a mere exercise in genre plundering." (May/231)



Keith Rowe & John Tilbury Dues For Dons (Ensemble)

Two thirds of Inpro group AMM join their considerable forces as a duo for the first time on record. Vacillating between calm and an extreme tension that shocked the air of the room when pierced, the session turned into a poignant elegy to pianist Tilbury's deceased mother. We said: "A spellbinding atmosphere of restraint is developed... even at the barest minimum, this is a record that grips the attention and envelops it completely." (June/232)



The Bug Pressure (Rephlex)

As God, Techno Animal and Ico, Kevin Martin has covered the extreme end of the electronic dub spectrum. As The Bug he incorporates dancehall and 'yardcore' reggae, and invites a host of MCs to make Pressure a truly pulverizing (pummeling of a mission. We said: "The Punky Buggs Party Bitch Madley solidified back in the '90s but never actually realized musically. Follow your bass to instincts and reel in the cross-fertilization if which Pressure is an especially rewarding upshot." (Apr/233)

Ken Hollings

Poet Getting back onstage again with Biting Tongues at the ICA in May, *Let's Get Sick* by Mu, the rise and rise and rise of Russian electronics, taking with Captain Canals, Joybubbles and Steve Wozniak about phone phreaking, presenting Space Music live at the Blausky Lodge of The Theosophical Society in London with Erik Davis, *Art Catalysts* 'Surviving in Space' conference at the Royal Institution, Strange Attractor Journal, Semiconductors live show at the Royal College of Art, Kraftwerk's *Tour De France Soundtracks*, screening *Fourteen* at the Horse Hospital, nights *Cling* at the Guinea Pig Club, recording *Welcome to Durbur* at the NPS studios in Holland with Hush Emmer and Jesse Spencer, and the *New Future Is Not What It Used to Be* and *Space* is The Place both available finally on DVD.

Hua Hsu

Post: The Democratic candidates acknowledged HipHop during the October debate. Pedro looking Zimmer Summerline in Brooklyn (The Rivers, Ya, Tom's, loy-Lo, The Stone Roses) and winterline in South Africa (Masekela, at Kippel's, Pickwick's, the Treasury, Juana Molina at Joe's Pub, Tony W at Delux). The results at Cane's Bay and Central Kitchen. Drinking Beck's coffee, thanks to Relic and the Black Keys. Anytime I heard Jay-Z's verse on "Mundan To Bach Ke" Roc-A-Fella on The O'Reilly Factor. Felipe Abo: English 170 reminding me that protest lives on.

Cone: The Democratic candidates claiming to be 'down' with HipHop during the October debate. (Related: the realization that none of these guys stands a chance next November.) Gladly leaving Pedro in an itting too long. Autumn in Cambridge. HipHop's fascination with spectacle. Berenice Steinbreimer American politics. RIP/KN Ishida (five years), E. Sae, A. Gibson, J. Chase, J. Hites, E. Smith, M. Santamaria, B. White, W. Spohn and B. Bonds.

Brian Merley

Yay! The late, great Jimmy Lyons finally given due recognition, courtesy of Ayler Records. Boo! London - in this regard, and in others. Dr. Johnson got it badly wrong. Yay! Confronting with Mark Wootell, a book to be published in autumn 2004 by an imprint of Sound 333. Boo! Mobile phones and the morons who use them. Yay! Resonance FM's loony tunes. Boo! Robert Walser's early novels remain out of print. Yay! Edinburgh - except, of course, for the military tattoos, the festival, and the bagpipe maulers on Princes Street. Boo! Vast quantities of bad Inpro CDs that, unsurprisingly, nobody wants. Yay! Thomas Evans, Telling Elvies mistakes. Boo! Iraq in ruins, Iraq in chains. Yay! Paul McCartney's oblique statement of famous nonentity David Byrne... And an extra Yay! for all the good music this city's coming my way.

Keith Molise

Sometimes it's good: 2003, music in meltdown, all channels open, no holds barred. Making music today feels as innocent and exciting as launching your own little satellite into infinite space, and listening to it is like picking up dust spirals from the void - what does this sound mean? What is it for? What does it fit with? All this uncertainty - how liberating! Modern electronic music lies at last from the dead hand of fashion. Great records by Lamescale, Mimos, Laval and, yes, David Sylvian seemed like perfect possible specks on a vast and glorious cosmic canvas.

But then it's bad! 2003, music in meltdown, nowhere to run, nowhere to hide. Making music feels as futile as sticking a needle in a haystack, and listening to it is like surveying endless fields of them - any needles here? And would I know one if I found one? All this uncertainty - it's sad, sad, sad. One incredible day at the Barbican (Alva Pynny polyphony - an art perfectly in tune with a culture - followed by Legit's massive absurdo-political opera *Le Grande Illusion*) suddenly made this year's part/ham seem, well, pointless. Modern electronic music, drifting and disengaged.

Anne Hilde Neast

Post: Lightning Bolt for lightning up my day/week/month/year with one explosive gig in Chicago. Jennie Laddell and her psychogeist performance at Sonar. Lydia Lunch and James Chance together again in the Ketting Factory. Arthur Lee And Love's *Forever Change* live at the RPN Home Economics (not all angry, beguiling). Blamania in Prague, beautiful and romantic North Devon, meeting Morton Harker, like flying. Electra Productions getting off the ground: again filter: conversations with Will Osham and Diamonds Galas. Resonance FM. Mike Kelley & Tony Quinlan's *Poetics Project* at the Barbican. Wire stage at Reside (especially Puschtschka at last with sunburned Goths staggering about to Hansel's howl coupled with the residue of godawful Coldplay from the neighbouring tent). Christian Maggery's *Video Quartet*, dinner with Carl, Nietzsche. Soeek's *Alex A Car*.

Cone: Mixed opportunities. Robert Wyatt documentary and Scott Walker box. Getting a peeing ticket. 'Spooal' relationship? RFP: Edward Said, Nina Simone and Johnny Cash. Still not owning a dog.

Edwin Pouncey

Post: Meeting ESP-Duk heroine Patty Waters and none god Dylan Carlson of Earth. Visiting the Teot Macak house in Woodland Hills, CA with Bryan Werner and being invited in to look around. *Adventure in Modern Music*: The Early Berlin, Chicago and the *Autonomous Under The Wire Festival*. Miron in Hyde Park, London. "Cowled performances" by Sums (X) at The Underworld, Camden Town and Linc Theatre, Harmermoss, London. Metroweb and Whitehouse shows at The Politics Of Noise, Regency, Brussels. *Whitehouse Piece* by at Cecil Sharp House, London. Receiving a first edition copy of Stefan Jaworski's *The Swiss Chansonn Compagnon* (Titan Books). ULM/ME boots. Hearing Peter Stampfel, Barry Drenthoff, Phil Minton, Lol Coulth, Steve Beresford, Evan Parker, Cameron James, David Tibet, Simon G/O and many others as *Diggers* guests on Resonance 104.4 FM. Resonance 104.4 FM being granted a license for another year's broadcasting. Seeing Jiff Tipping and her fellow radical singers jamming on stage with Lol Coulth at this year's LMC Festival. Clafar Elavson's *The Weather Project* (full fog version) and Sigmund Polke at Tate Modern.

Cone: Gulp! War Two and its lingering consequences. Frank Lowe RIP. SM not being able to get past the first track of Neil Young & Crazy Horse's perplexing *Greeneville* album.

AU & ROCK

Wire (New Line)

Subliminal Hand Of The Man

The Trick: D with Theory Of Lord Knows What (Eclipse)

Cul De Sac The Stranger's Wife (Strange Attractors Audio House)

Sightings Absorbies (Load)

Damon & Naomi With Kurihara Song To The Siren (Sub Pop)

Black Dice Beaches And Canyons (Fat Cat)

The Magic Band Back To The Front (All Tomorrow's Parties)

Lightning Bolt Wonderful Rainbow (Load)

Sam Shalabi Osama (Alien8)

Sightings Michigan Haters (Psych-O-Path)

Erase Errata At Crystal Palace (Blast First)

Califone Quicksand/Cradlesakes (Thrill Jockey)

Maher Shalal Hash Baz Blues Du Jour (Geographic)

No-Neck Blues Band Intimacy (Sound+Stone)

Doo-Doettes/Keiji Haino/Rick Potts Free Rock (IPSF)

Simon Reynolds

Pros: Duzze Rasal "Weird," Boy In Da Corner, intimacy and unprecedented alignment of Mercury Prize Committee and my taste. Grime and Rap: Kanye's "Boys Love Girls," productions by Wiley (especially "Too Risky"), NASTY's Janessa and Bigga-Man, Social Order/Sleazy Androgynous pressure. Junior Boys, "Last Earl" — a kinder, gentler direction two-step could have gone. Other: Ricardo Villalobos, Vitez Kariel, Abarat Collective, LFO, Michael Mayer, Sean Paul, Rottm-jungles! Soundscapes, The Redefiner, Resonance anthology. Vintage: Gabriel Byrne's *Methodology* 7678, Pyralis, Blake Orshide's *The Greatest Hit* + EPs on LTM/Daria, 23 Skidoo, Brash Hustle, Factors, *Essential Love*, King Sunny Adin, Black Cherry moss, Metal Urban, Home T/Cosco Taxi/Sheba/Raskin's "Pleasant Anthem," Like Lightning Bolt, Avey Tare & Panda Bear, Reading TWANCO/Woebot, K/Punk, Hensbone, Autonauts/Worlds Of Possibility, Sonosolus, Yulky, loads more blogs and Websites, Marley's Words and Music.

Cons: The war. The even more shameful reconstruction! The general across-the-culture vibe of cowardice, keeping your head down, settling for less.

Tom Riddle

Pros: Amsterdam, As Serious As Your Life; Choices Girl City Of God; A Confederacy Of Dunces; "Dancefloors"; House Of Leaves; Remoteness, Kill Bill, Life Of Pi, "Little Johnny Jewel"; "Naps"; The Minor Man Sessions; Rasta Communication; Richard Gaddall Gallery; "Rock & Roll Singer"; Spider Spitz: "Who Knows Where The Time Goes?"

Cons: The Beatles

Stephen Robinson

Pros: A level of geographical mobility incommensurate with apparent social immobility: France, Germany, Spain and Italy (somewhat). Things that left an impression: Artoz's *Tapes in Court* and Barcelona in the spring. Jan Jansen den Uyl in the Gemeldagelijkse Berlin in the summer. Laughing like drane at the absurdity of Venice in the autumn. Opera, wrecks my listening life. Beethoven, Schubert, Liszt in general. Berg, Webern & Villa 186. Spooky summer seasons for Aufgehoben 4, a paired down one-stop. Stash on particularly fine form. An encounter with Maja Ratkje (composer and performer) in London in October. Catching up with Makoto, Hgash and co in Brighton once again. Decent in-car entertainment at last and the over-melancholic Kolovrat.

Cons: Despite its completion, the release of *Aufgehoben 3* acquires something of the eschatological fatality of the previous, ANT time now. Roleless summer heat in Berlin. Impact of the regressive slide from modernism to Romanticism on my capacity to absorb 'new' music. Subsequent inability to compile a true list of the records that really altered my year (little of it post-1914). Too little live music and too little time for reviews.

Lina D Russell

Pros: Leaving the ICA and starting up Electra, getting funding for her noise sound art show, working on British Council projects, curating Radical Entertainment at the ICA, curating Once Seen video programme in Oslo. Art: Goshenberg, Bismale, Imogen Seward/er's *The Whisper Heard at Mar's* gallery, The Protest Project at the Barbican, Complicité, The Elephant Menaces, Lari Lasch, Damirah Gales, King B at the Her Noise gig in Utrecht, Rine Grinnell's night in London, Spunk in Venice. Starting the London Consortium and hanging out in libraries again. Travel: going back in the Namibian desert, an intense visit to New York, traveling through galaxies in Bushwick, Bratislava.

Cons: Bad art experienced in the unbearable heat at the Venice Biennale, slowness of getting projects off the ground, not being able to say no to work I don't want to take on, working at weekends, awful commute through Telewest.

DUB & ROCK

Rhythm & Sound With The Artists (Bunai Ma/Indigo)

The B (Pressure Sounds)

Dennis Bovell Decibel (Pressure Sounds)

Augustus Pablo In Fine Style 1973-79 (Pressure Sounds)

Cedric Im Brooks & The Light Of Saba

Cedric Im Brooks & The Light Of Saba (Honest Jon's)

King Tubby The Roots Of Dub/Dub From The Roots (Moll-Selkoto)

Keith Hudson Playing It Cool & Playing It Right (Basic Reply)

Tappa Zukie Dub Em Zukie: Rare Dubs 1976-79 (Jamaican Recordings)

Prince Far-I Heavy Manners: The Anthology 1977-83 (Trojan)

Rankin' Joe Zion High (Blood And Fire)

Philip Sherborne

Pros: After a few years of flagging four-to-the-floor, Techno returned with a vengeance: MicroHouse put on weight and rediscovered serenity, shuffling into a banner year that saw great releases from Playhouse (Brothers 34, Villalobos), Spectral (Matthew Dear, Ostrome), Perlon, Kompakt, and the unstoppable Anal Linx, laptop supergroup Nead Niko redefined perfunctory processing at MUTEK, and The Mother Herbat Big Band proved that there's life after jazz at Sonar. Personal highlights were purely geographical, from ride racing at MUTEK Chile to four months of baseli escapism in Barcelona. Cons: San Francisco still feels dumpled and coming, but that's nothing compared to what's wrong with the US these days. In the entertainment games, wordcounts keep getting shorter, coverage is ever more market-driven, and every demographic is an island of protectionism. It was a good year for know-nothings, though, whose smugness made the world go round.

Nick Southgate

Pros: Working in an office within Reasonance FM's broadcast area. Satisfying my hungry musical soul with the outpourings from the Free Folk Explosion. Subliminal Hand Of The Man's feist swamp stomp at the Lyne. Achieved solo ascent of Gravity's Rainbow without use of oxygen. The Seeds' overnight-only recreation of 1960-era Sunset Strip flower punk fury at The Borderline.

Cons: Finding out I voted for war and tuition fees. The nation's speed-dating craze proves that all human dignity can be finally commensalised. Wimbledon FC move to Milton Keynes to lose the glory of Division Two and worse. Ceiling collapse at home narrowly avoids breaking my neck, but treasured guitar is not so lucky. Reminded I can't play it anyway. Increasingly noting that teenagers like the music I liked when I was a teenager. Policemen are also looking younger.

Alva Noto + Ryuichi Sakamoto Vicon (Raster-Noton)

Kraftwerk Your De France Soundtracks (JEM)

So So (Will Jockey)

Fennesz Live In Japan (Headz)

Autechre Drift 730 (Warp)

Leafcutter John The Housebound Spirit (Planet Mu)

Rechenzentrum The Director's Cut (Milk Plateau)

Tim Hecker Radio Amor (Milk Plateau)

Donna Summer This Needs To Be Your Style (Irritant)

Matmos The Civil War (Matador)

Guido Möbius Klaxon (Klangkno)

Wasteland Amen Fee (Transparent)

Luomo The Present Lover (Force Inc)

Coil Live Four-One (Threshold House)

Ricardo Villalobos Alacahofa (Playhouse)

Ry Cooder + Manuel Gaitan Mambo Simuendo (Nonesuch)

Pancal Pran Nath Midnight (Just Dreams)

Traditional Musicians

Waz: Music Of The Berta From The Blue Nile, Sudan (Wergo)

Raz Mesinal Resurrections For Gostokin (Tzadik)

Traditional Musicians Ethiopia: An Polyphonic (Ocena)

Various The Rough Guide To The Music Of China (World Music Network)

Traditional Musicians

The King's Musicians: Royalist Music Of Buganda-Uganda (Topic)

Kazuki Tomokawa Box (PSF)

Traditional Musicians Radio Java (Sublime Frequencies)

Idjah Hadidjah

Sundanese Jaipong And Other Popular Music (Nonesuch Explorer)

Kadri Gopalnath Scintillating Sax (Felmay/Dunya)

David Stubbs

Prose: The continuing, exponential proliferation, expansion, multiplication of musical activity in the leftfield and beyond. As John Zorn says: "We're on the outside looking out." New Japanese music: some of these people have reached the 22nd century early. Russian Ark! film of the year. Being allowed to write a book about Jim Henson. Blogs.

Cons: The strange feeling of despair in the face of the abundant that comes with the continuing, exponential proliferation, expansion, multiplication of musical activity in the left field and beyond. 'Mainstream' culture. As the counter-cultural resolutions of the past retreat into the obscure mists of history and no longer act as a leader to the popular everyday, the appalling signs of the subsequent melancholia are beginning to show, in everything from the dismal state of Channel 4 to Crowie's Angels 2. Truly live: bloody hell.

Dave Tompkins

Prose: A man in a snap-brim hat yelled into an air conditioner: "I see you in the shadows! I don't care about your DNA, I just want to see your fucking heart!" J. Rocc: doing doubles of "Vitamin C" in NYC, talking Phibes with BambiLips. Grendawar XXX: impersonating Phibes going into a record store and selling for Roger Troutman records, hideous hag with this bumper sticker: "Life's A Witch & Then You Fly", Man Music; more weed-bass rap deems please, the 90 year old from the RICH Signal Corp. grabbed my wrist and said, "Remember. Grendawar can sneak in between the pants!" and that wasn't no dream, hearing the tees squeak like cellar doors while hiking in under mountain descenders and getting Blue Irish slapped by branches. SquidSound, First Aid Look, he and skanking for ants at a concert. Core: Neurocardiomyopathy triggered by a vasovagal response to pain and a Maggoton record, when's the goldenrod book, use.

David Toop

Prose: Finishing a new book made me happy. Throughout 2002 I struggled to begin chapter three, so reaching the end of the whole thing by April this year felt like coming out from under a huge slab of concrete. Recording a new album with Max Eastley, that made me happy. Drol Creative is our third record in 30 years, which is a pressure in itself, but our economy of effort has its compensations. Performing with Alex Saez made me happy. A good sort of time got me out of the house. Conversations with students were stimulating. Getting married made me happy. Cons: Feeling like a cork in a hurricane made me feel unhappy. My work room was too hot. Not so much to complain about really.

Dan Warburton

Prose: Steadily increasing number of visits to www.pandorasatlands.com Webste makes getting up every morning at 6am to work on it more worthwhile. Thanks to always to Manic & Mia for putting up with me while I do it. Biggest thrill the year was playing with Return Of The New Thing (Sean-Luc Guerinot, Edward Pernaud, Francois Fuchs and myself) to a standing-room-only crowd in Brussels' s Glenn Miller Cafe. Thanks to Ayler Records' Jon Stron for organising it - and for releasing the Ayler Copenhagen Tapes and the Jenny Lyons box, two of the year's epiphanies. Cons: If you know what the French word 'con' means, I can give you quite a long list of them, which would probably include most members of the current British, French and American governments. AND the ill-yuvored cowards who waste hate mail to the Website and don't have the balls to leave their real email addresses: you know who you are...

Ben Watson

Prose: Global millions say No to the UK/US attack on Iraq (16 Feb); When Worlds Collide: Mullin Men and 10 10 play Zappa (Ocen, 5 November); 300,000 on Shop Bush demo (London, 20 November); Rapper/Carewift/Enoson (Browning, 17 November); Elter's pink hair.

Cons: Cultural commodities currently so niche-marketed to foster solvent retards that global criticism is sidelined to Weblogs (hence www.fantastichic.co.uk). A letter from a crucial musician, "The 'scene' is so bad and preoccupied with non-overgiving junk that my stuff is considered to be old-fashioned." With the exception of the usual Lower East Side guys we're all alone out here. The new jazz/improv scene is going pop. Most of the vetting and most of the festivals promote a rock aesthetic. The jazz thing, the REAL jazz thing, is disregarded. 99 per cent of the promoters of this music and 99.9 per cent of the writers are morons, ignorant of the history or culture of free jazz who are killing art and calling it success. They don't understand jazz and they never will. Most of the musicians too. Ultimately they are racists who hate black culture and want to own edge music casually. Censorism is as epidemic as SARS. People are rushing to be the next thing rapists with a cult of personality around them. Any more references to Don Cherry and Albert Ayler from people who can't play, can't swing and won't deep and I'll lose what is left of my mind.

HI

Outkast *Waterbury/The Love Below* (Arista)
Jay-Z *The Black Album* (XL)
Prefuse 73 *One Word Etinguisher* (Warp)
King Geedorah *Take Me To Yr Leader* (Big Dada)
Edan *Some Your Tape Deck* (Lewis Recordings)
Buck 65 *Talkin' Honky Blues* (WEA)
Nephilim Modulation Systems
Woe To Those O Land Whose King Is A Child (Big Dada)
Themselves *The No Music Of Afifs* (Anticon)
Kid Koala *Some Of My Best Friends Are DJs* (Ninja Tune)
Alias *Muted* (Anticon)



Aki Onda

I'm reading back my diary of the year 2003... After having heavy snow in NYC, I walked around East Village. We haven't had such a heavy snowfall for the last 30 years. All transportation stopped, the traffic of the city was absorbed into the whiteness of the snow. So QUIET. The invasion of Iraq started. The radio was always running commentaries of the bombings, so disturbing, but I couldn't turn it off... Suddenly, a song of Leon Thomas, a piece from *Spirits Known & Unknown*, flowed from the radio, between the two news programmes. His melancholy voice melted the fear in the frozen air, moved me and made me cry. Too sentimental, but I can't forget... In spring, Lorca Connors' album, *The Departing Of A Dreamer Vol 2*, haunted me. I saw him on Houston Street, asked why he hasn't played much recently. "Well, I'm an old man who is from the 20th century... mm... mm." I couldn't understand what he was saying. He was just mumbling, so casual. His guitar on this album was also just mumbling, but it's gotten so intense, and creepy like the mood of the city... In the summer, the blackout on the East Coast happened on the day I flew back from Tokyo. It was like, the whole city was thrown into a black hole, and really strange that the noises we usually listen to went missing. So QUIET again... Autumn came. The albums of Cassette Menopause were released, and I started touring in Europe. I saw the process of standardization going on everywhere. The main streets of the big cities look the same now. People's life is losing its character. So SCARY... I was in St. Etienne in France. This city flourished with the mining industry, but all the mines have been closed in the last few decades. It's like a forgotten city, echoes of the past are floating everywhere. Maybe, because of that, the city still has strong local taste, which made me feel good... Anyway, the seasons turn around, and whatever happens, life goes on.

IMPROV

Lime *Scale* (Incas)
Spring Heel Jack *Live* (Thirsty Ear)
Tetuz *Akiyama/Toshimaru Nakamura/Taku Sugimoto/Mark Wastell*
Folding (Contrast)
Andy Moor/Thomas Lehn/John Butcher
Thermal (Unsound)
Exilas-J *Electric Conception "Avant-garde"* (PSP)
Globe Unity Orchestra 2002 (Intakt)
John Butcher *Visible Ear* (Piranga)
Rhodri Davies *Trem* (Contrast)
Sealed Knot *Surface Plane* (Meriscus)
Kelth Rowe & John Tilbury *Duos For Dons* (Erstwhile)
Barry Guy & Evan Parker *Birds And Blades* (Intakt)
Tim Barnes/Toshio Kajiwara/Marina Rosenfeld
A Water's Wake (Quasarsbaker)
Matt Davis/Phil Durrant/Mark Wastell *Open* (Intakt)
Kaffe Matthews/Andrea Neumann/Sachiko M
In Case Of Fire Take The Stairs (Improvised Music From Japan)
Kelth Rowe/Thomas Lehn/Marcus Schmickler
Robbit Run (Erstwhile)



Chris Watson

Weather Report for Touch taken shape during Jan - March as I mix up tropical thunderstorms and howling blizzards in my left workplace at home. During breaks I descend to join the rest of my family, prepare food and listen to messages of expanding doom from Radio 4 news. During meals we listen to a psychedelic family mix of Jim Hendrix, Christian Fennesz, Pink, The Wire Tapper, Stereophones and Philip Jeck. Jon Wozniakoff and I create audio visual assemblages at the Sheffield Lovehype festival and Cat 'N' Spice at the ICA. Here I am inspired and fuelled by sets from Francisco López, Trevor Wishart, Christian Calan and Bernard Parmegiani. However, the soundtrack of the year goes to Iceland. In June I stand ankle deep in Arctic mists at the foot of Breiddalsfjall recording the atmosphere and imagining *A Journey To The Centre Of The Earth*. When I get home I reread the book, clearly some of it is made up. Animal of the year is the great white shark - in particular the four-metre long females which approached the back of our boat during a film trip off Cape Town in September - silent but fabulous. Respect.



Curtis Newman

Despite personal successes (Wire released an album, *cons*, that saw us equally lauded in the pages of *Entertainment Weekly* and *Artforum* while swim released two albums, by Akatomb & Aurelia, that have found us tagged as 'the best band in the UK') the year has been very much a transitional one in musical culture. The big 'return to rock' of the millennial coup produced some definite gems from such diverse luminaries as Lano & Black Rebel Motorcycle Club, but here in the aftermath we seem to be struggling on a diet of rather desperate retroism (Kings Of Leon, Jet, Libertines etc) leavened only by general silliness from *The Darkness* and *Dixie Rascal*. Oh and we've also had the pungent *longue*, whatever that was (actually I'm married to one of the original proponents) Moll's old band Minimal Compact are back on stage and making a late showing for the surprise comeback of the year! probably best defined by the fact that there is (allegedly) a section for it in the Rough Trade shop. Of course, it's almost a given that there is going to be, I not next year then the one after, a reappraisal of the now 'unfashionable', but not as unfashionable as it was two years ago! electronic music. I know for me one of the best moments of 03 was listening to the *Sail LFO* album in a fire car driving round Portugal, but maybe that's just 'Techno nostalgia'!

JAZZ

MODERN COMPOSITION

Peter Brotzmann/William Parker/Hamid Drake
Never Too Late But Always Too Early (Eremite)

Miles Davis The Complete Jack Johnson Sessions (Columbia)

Jimmy Lyons The Box Set (Ayley)

Albert Ayler The Copenhagen Tapes (Ayler)

Anthony Braxton & Wadada Leo Smith

Organic Resonances (P)

William Parker Violin Trio Scrapbook (Thirsty Ear)

The Art Ensemble Of Chicago The Message (P Recordings)

Cecil Taylor: The Ensemble The Light Of Corona (FMP)

Dave Douglas Freak In (Bluebird)

Steve Lacy Work (Sketch)

OUTER LIMITS

Alan Civil New York Minute (X)
Nurse With Wound Sak Mene Celeste (United Dairies)
Chris Watson Weather Report (Touch)
Aki Onda
 Bon Voyage! (Cassette Memories Vol 2) (Improvised Music From Japan)
Henry Flynt Back Porch Hillbilly Blues Vols 1 & 2 (Locust)
Steve Roden Speak No More About The Leaves (Sun)
Yasunao Tone Yasunao Tone (Aphodite)
Kaffe Matthews cd ebb + flo (Annettesworks)
Keiji Haino Mazu Wa Iro O Nakuso Ka (PSF)
Angus MacLise The Cloud Doctrine (Sub Rosa)
Throbbing Gristle
 TG24: 24 Hours Of Throbbing Gristle (Grey Area Of Mute)
Keiji Haino
 "C'est Parfait" Endocrine Tu Tombra La Tête La Première (Turtle's Dream)
Angus MacLise Astral Collapse (Quakebasket)
Dredd Foole & The Din The Whys Of Fire (Estate Peace)
Eyvind Kang Live Low To The Earth, In The Iron Age (Abduction)



Laetitia Sadier (Monade)

This year has been very overfull and rich in good things coming out, people being creative in all corners of the planet. A few things have caught my attention like The Sea And Gale remix EP and also the beautiful LP Glaze. Something you can dance to all the way through. The Broadcast EP also made for some lovely listening times, looped on the CD player for a while earlier on this year. Mouse On Mars' label Song was very prolific and interested my ears with Nicole, So and new Schickelpoppler outings. Honest Jun's Records released some excellent – and up till then unknown to me – music by Cedric In Brooks And The Light Of Sabas, great, great, great stuff to procure your trombone to – or mixe with your favourite person by the fireplace. The High Llamas provided us with some gorgeous music on their Beats, Corn And Muzic, very soft and deep chords and melodies that never fail to soothe where it hurts. I did see a film that made me want to take heavy drugs and weapons: some beautiful pictures called Goodbye Lenin, celebrating the centist of a familar – therefore better – past in the former East Germany, really to puke for. Amelle in the old and now dead Stalin world, incongruous... Vais for this past year, hoping the rest will be even better! I hear there are some great tracks on the upcoming Blonde Redhead LP



Steven Stapleton

Pros: Misty Elliott. Discovering the music of Myrlo, Jax, Kola, Gangsta Boo, Tera, Eve, Simple E, Li Kim, Roxanne Shante, Rahemada, Jean Grae, Lina, Ma X, Yoyo, Rah Digga, The Herbaliser, Arnt, T Love, Bone, Fay Brown, Dirty South Drive, Da Brat, Queen Latifah, Lady Of Rage, Heather B, The Rootz Roseanne, Me Jade, Gaspar Noe's incredible working with Jim O'Rourke, Gyrlife And In: Apt. Est. on a new project (Angry Electric Finger). Meeting some beautiful people in San Francisco, hello to Matt Waldron and Burnside (Mesochronal). Cons: The death of Nina Simone. The brutal and senseless murder of 4000 wild goats in the west of Iceland. Bush, war, newspapers, media, Marxism, pollution, mediocrity and, oh yes, the Music Street Preachers are still with us.

COMPILATIONS A-Z

An Anthology Of Noise And Electronic Music: Second A-Chronology (Sub Rosa)
Amalgams (Fractal)
American Song-Poem Anthology: Do You Know The Difference Between Big Wood And Brush (BarNone)
China: The Sonic Avant Garde (Post-Concrete)
Das Dreidimensionale Mobiusband (Flying Swimming)
Goodbye, Babylon (Dust-To-Digital)
Down In The Basement: Joe Bussard's Treasure Trove Of Vintage 78s 1926-37 (Old Hat)
Flowers In The Wildwood: Women In Early Country Music 1923-39 (Trikont)
Lib. Fabric Compilation (Cubic)
Music From the ONCE Festival 1961-69 (New World)
New York Noise: Dance Music From The New York Underground (Soul Jazz)
Nice Up The Dance: Two Worlds Clash (Soul Jazz)
The Night Gallery (Alchemy)
Room 207 (Cirque CD)
Rough Trade Shops: Post-Punk 01 (Mute)
Space Is No Place: Noise From The NYC Underground (Psych-O-Path)
Studio One DJs (Soul Jazz)
Visionfest Visionlive (Thirsty Ear)
Wanna Buy A Crapzak? (Carpark)
Wooden Guitar (Locust)
You Can Never Go Fast Enough (Pain)



Kieran Hobden

Pros: The Mars Volta. Liquid Liquid live. Domino 10th Anniversary. Modib. Jay Dee and MF Doom. Touring with The Animal Collective, Icarus, Prefuse 73, Merzbow, A Gnarz Dope, Nobody Owens, Boom Bip and Redhead. 50 Cent – "In Da Club" The Rayne – "Didn't You Know" Assembly. No Neck... Sunbasted and anybody else reaching for freedom in their music. Good mixtapes (Stack Reality, Eddie Gale, Bad Gnarz And Binas). James Lidel live at Mount Paj in the morning. Jason Evers's record sleeves. Dizzee Rascal. Redhead at Glastonbury. White Stripes "Hardest Button To Button" video. Working with Vaisle Burges. Cons: The wars. The governments. The end of Dawson's Creek. Jay, Kings Of Leon and all that fake rock shit.

REISSUES

Kevin Ayers *Joy Of A Toy* (EMI)

Shirley Collins *Within Sound* (RedTing)

Shirley & Dolly Collins *Love, Death & The Lady* (BGO)

Einstürzende Neubauten *Kolaps* (Potonatz)

Fred Frith *Speechless* (ReR)

Eddie Henderson

Realizacj/Inside Out: Anthology Volume 2 The Capricorn Years (Soul Brother)

Jackie-O Motherfucker

The Music! Free Music/Wow! (All Tomorrow's Parties)

Rev Charlie Jackson

God's Got It: The Legendary Booker And Jackson Singles (CaseQuarter)

Kosokuya *Kosokuya* (PSF)

Joan La Barbara *Voice Is The Original Instrument* (Lovely Music)

Mars *The Complete Studio Recordings NYC 1977-1978* (G3G/Spooky Sound)

Evan Parker *The Snake Decides* (Pa)

Ron 'Pate's Debonairs *Featuring Fred Lane*

Roulette's (Paraphysical Revue) (Alcohol)

Soft Machine *BBC Radio 1987-71* (Hux)

Sonic Youth *Dirty: Deluxe Edition* (Geffen)

Joseph Spence *Happy All The Time* (Water)

Television *Marquee Moon Remastered* (Rhino)

Larry Young *Mothership* (Blue Note)

Nell Young *On The Beach* (Werners)

23 Skidoo *The Calling Is Coming* (Ronin/LTM)



Henry Ficht

Post: The high point was the appearance of Ram Narayan and Family at Symphony Space, 1 November. In the mid 80s, La Monte Young played me Ram Narayan's record of raga Shudh Taal, and it opened up a new chapter in thinking about music and in composing. So even though I never got to anything, I had to go see him. Ram Narayan's sacred performance, Sri Raga, was mesmerizing as I always hope Hindu music will be. Ram Narayan performed raga Rishab Kalyan, a premier raga, but one I'm not attached to. The way he plays up a storn at 76 is humbling. I saw a 1989 interview which I saw on the Web the year I don't want to judge his music which I haven't heard, but I enjoy his testimony. **Cons:** I can't attend an Indian performance without having a double reaction, being mesmerized by it, at the same time, thinking how Western culture is condemned by the comparison. If the Western problem was once greasy taste and missing pieces of humanity, in the 20th century that was eclipsed by the self-hatred. One regrets the pressure to sensationalize and kitschify which Indian music is under. The over the top tabla player, applause after solos, Ram Narayan's Western style vibrato on the sustains.



David Sylvian

Emotionally the new year traced a downward spiral. Creatively the inverse was true. Found vocabulary with which to speak the unspeakable whilst in the grip of trauma. Excitement, freedom, luminosity of mind. The humble beginnings of *Sensadhi* Sound. The learning curve. Business as creative enterprise. Free flow of energy not experienced in this context before now. Emotional equilibrium. Young *Aliveness*. The considerable patience, curiosity and generosity of audiences throughout Europe. In response to the leafy nationalistic fervor of the current US administration, the nurturing of world citizenship (*Just Sakamoto*). (On a page in history the seeds were sown for the beginning of the end of the American empire.) Works in progress: Steve Jansen. Harold Budd. Christian Fennell.

The Eleventh

This year's charts were compiled from the notes of the following contributors (each contributor's individual record of the year is shown in brackets).

Steve Barker (Rev Charlie Jackson: God's Got It) Mike Barnes (Robert Wyatt: Cuckoo!) Clive Bell (Morrissey: Suedeless) Du Barbanis (The Beatnuts: Recordings) Chris Blackford (Allied Herth: eShip Sun) Maxima Boon (Angels Of Light: Everything Is Good Here/Please Come Home) Ben Boydwick (Outback: Spokenword/Love Below) Philip Clark (Michael Finnissy: The Church) Mia Clark (Cheer Accident: Gumballhead) The Cat Julian Cowley (Blue) Gene Tynnyr: Xus Your Time Christoph Cox (David Sylvian: Biomech) Alan Cummings (Kazuo: Komokawa) Bob Linn Domestico/Russell (Diamanda Galas: La Segrega) Canto Phil England (The Magic Band: Back To The Front) Louise Gray (Cat Power: You Are Free) Jim Haynes (Nurse With Wound: Salt More Celestial) Richard Henderson (Gaby Kerpel: Constellation) Tony Hemington (Phant) Fran Niah (Koolhaas) Ken Hollings (Who: Finger And Gelf) Hsu Hui (Hollertronix: Never Scared) David Korman (Double Leopards: Hivie Mox) Rhana Khosro (Thomas Komer: Zyklop) Bob Kopf (Ray: Hare Mauz) Wils O Nakuto Kili Alan Licht (We Onks: Bon Voyage) Dave Mandl (Opex) → J. Brian Marley (Steve Rodin: Light) Fume! Mass Masters (Sightings: Absolved) Jerome Mounsell (So So) Keith Malone (Jurnal: Obsession) Will Montgomery (John Will: Hybrid) Brian Morton (Nick Turner: Mouth) John Murray (Catherine Quakenbush/Crocodiscus/Amie Hilde: Nest) David Sylvian: Biomech) Tom Penchard (DM & Jemini: Ghetto Pop Life) Edwin Povey (Angus MacLise: The Cloud Doctrine) Moss Reeves (Cosmo: Wall: Clear) Simon Reynolds (Dizore: Rasool: Bay In Du Corner) Tom Ridge (Four Tet: Round) Stephen Robinson (Throbbing Gristle: TG24: 24 Hours Of Throbbing Gristle) Peter Shapiro (Various Goodbye, Baby!) Chris Sharp (Sunburned Heart: Of The Man: The Toilet-Dance Theory Of Love) Knows Who! Philip Sherburne (Dizore: Rasool: Bay In Du Corner) Nick Southgate (Vincenzo/Architectural Orchestra: The Queen Of Gues) David Stubbs (Basement Jaxx: Rich Kids) David Toot (David Sylvian: Biomech) Dan Warburton (Bellef: Karlin: Quantum) Ben Watson (Landscape: Limestone) Rob Young (Pursuant: Dreams: Top Rock)

Charts

Playlists from the outer limits

Da Real World:

Ladies Of HipHop 15

Music

Cuts For Luck And Scars For Freedom (Goodie) **Kala**
 Ready I Approach (Low Life)
 I'd Star Kitty's Revenge (Universal)
Simple B
 Colosse Un Sound (Fod)
T Love
 Long Way Back (Fonney)
Boss
 Born Gangster (Chase)
Love
 Stranger On Earth (Arista)
Ansil
 All Money Is Legal (Blackhead)
Behave
 RR Queen (Goodie)
Dirty South Girls
 Play Wit It (Dirty South)
Mo X
 Unlady Like (No Land)
Jeane Rose
 Attack Of The Attacking Things (Overt Funk Music)
Poison
 Suffice Lady (MCA)
Rage
 Necessary Roughness (Deathrow)
Rin Diggz
 Dirty Harriet (Epic)

Compiled by Steven Stapleton, Nurse With Wound

Stimmen Stimmen 15

Robert Achley
 She Was A Victor (Javvy Music)
Michel Chén
 Regimen Johnson (Nul/GRM)
Audio Arts/Orchestra Gallery
 Chantier Creggan (Audio Arts)
Parsons Pig
 The King Mother (Rough Trade)
Maurice Lemire
 Maurice Des Barbares Blancs (MP3)
DS I Woman
 Post Scriptum (Alga Margher)
Colette Niggy
 Thelma (Le Chant Du Monde)
Rasoulétre & Gangestack
 Love Action 902214 San Francisco, Club Tuffin
 (Echir, King)
Milki Spence Road
 This Is A Tree (Jaded Debris)
JA Kormann
 Musikalische Selbstablenkung 107475
 (JA Verlag Wien)
Young Villagers From The Region Of Borneo, Hungary
 Now You Greetings (Clonal)
Bernard Herzbrich
 Derwisch (Le Robert Lettre H)
 (Continued School Verlag)
The Hatters
 The West Point (Moneyman Productions)
MY Mathews
 Single Suit For Two (Dance)
John & Yoko
 John & Yoko (Poly)

Compiled by Frank Donneni, Stimmen Stimmen, Radio1, Berlin, www.radio1.de

Round Midnight 15

John Zorn
 Unlabeled Music (Dada)
Robert Wyatt
 Cuckoo (Djazz) **Wolfgang Rindt**
 Judo Of Two Cities: Complete 1956-67 Sessions
 (Newman)
Robert Bergman & Thomas Chapin
 Tunes 1997 (Epic/Decca)
James Lopus
 The Film Set (Kyle)
Happy Apple
 Youth Criminal (Nul)
William Parker Trio
 Songbook (Thirty Six)
Peter Newell & William Parker
 Kitchener (Jaded Decca)
Vandermark 5
 Aspects For Light (Grove)
Mario Schiano/Antonio Meola
Mario Cristofolini
 Agostini, Una Fantasia Cosmica (3 Maritima)
David Grubbs & Matt Gustafson
 Off Road (Blue Champion)
Andy Moor/Thomas Luter/John Butcher
 Thermal (Fringe Records)
Archive Shop
 I Know About The Lake (Hologram)
Art Ensemble Of Chicago
 Tribute To Lester (ECM)
Lee Konitz
 Notes (Sire)

Compiled by Enrico Ravada, Massimo Bressan and Enrico Ravada, Contrasto, Raiway 305 & 98.5 FM
 www.contrasto.it

The Office Ambience

Arthur Russell
 Calling Out Of Context (Audiob)
Miley Eliott
 This Is Not A Tree (Epic)
Sontag's New Woman
 Postmodern Music (Mute)
LOUDHEAD
 Ten (Big Dada)
The Rev Lester Knox Of Tiffin, GA
 Put Your Face In Gear: The 200th Anniversary
 (Soundvision)
Bees
 New Sound Somewhere (Warp)
Elizabeth Cotton
 Freight Train, Folkways And Instrumentals With Guitar
 (Nile Sound Corp)
Veritas
 Folk And Pop Sounds Of Sumatra Vol 1
 (Goddess Frequency)
Veritas
 The Night Gallery: 21st Century Psychiatric
 Underground (Athena)
Artur Piaz
 Demos and Blind Light 1992-1994 (Epic)
Aiko Suzuki
 Futaba (Beyoncé Incentive & Hare)
Daniel Garfield
 On The Other Side Of The Window (Revolver)
Vancouver Orchestra
 Unity Sound Action Vol 13 (Unity Sound Archive)
Ben Parker
 The Sound Decides (Fog)
Pysnoter
 Audited (Arista)

Compiled by The Ambience System

We welcome charts from record shops, radio shows, clubs, DJs, labels, musicians, readers etc. Email: charts@twelve.co.uk

Barcode sticks (see Revised 2002)



Reviews



Electrified reviewed in Soundcheck

Soundcheck A-Z

Masayo Asahara 53
Au 53
Derek Bailey 53
FS Blumm 53
Borgmann/Brötzmann/Parker/Bakr 53
Matthew Bourne 53
Peter Brötzmann & Walter Perkins 53
Chris Burn's Ensemble 55
Christian Calon & Chantal Dumas 55
Chicago Underground Trio 55
Conditions 55
Bobby Conn & The Glass Gypsies 55
Curlew 55
Deerhoof 57
Chris DeLaurenti 53
Dub Narcotic Sound System 57
John Duncan 57
Electrelane 57
Eyeless In Gaza & Lol Coxhill 57
The Flying Luttenbachers 58
Teruhisa Fukuda 58
Grydeland/Kluffen/Lovens 58
Erdem Helvacioğlu 53
Hoahio 58
Hooker/Miller/Rinaldo 59
Hyperyak 59
Susie Ibarra & Mark Dresser 59
Abeer Jay 59
Tom Johnson 54
Kayo Dot 60
Guy Klucsevsek & Philip Johnston 60
Lesser 60
Alvin Lucier 60
Phil Minton & Roger Turner 61
Neurosis & Jarboe 61
Nobody 61
No Spaghetti Edition 58
Einar Örn 63
John Oswald 63
Evan Parker Electroacoustic Ensemble 63
Poing 63
Raku Sugifatti 54
Reynolds 53
Elliott Sharp 63
The Sons Of TC Lethbridge 63
The Space Between w/Joëlle Léandre 65
The Space Between w/Matthew Sperry 65
Stereolab 65
Thinking Plague 65
'Blue' Gene Tyranny 65
Urban Myth & Steve Beresford 65
USAlsamonster 67
Various: *The Blues* 67
Various: *Folk And Pop Sounds Of Sumatra Vol 1* 67
Various: *Goodbye, Babylon* 56
Various: *The Lanthanides* 52
Various: *Night Recordings From Bali* 67
Various: *Radio Java* 67

Columnns

Size Matters 62
The Compiler 64
The Boomerang 66
Avant Rock 68
Critical Beats 69
Dub 70
Electronica 71
Global 72
HipHop 73
Jazz & Improv 74
Outer Limits 75

Print Run 76

Joe Harriott: *Fire In His Soul*
By Alan Robertson
Honky Tonk
By Henry Horenstein
Improvvised Music From Japan Extra 2003
Edited by Yoshiyuki Suzuki

Cross Platform 78

Cameron Jamie Edwin Pouncey on the LA film maker's obsession with movies, monsters and The Melvins
Reviews Merce Cunningham and Matmos take over art spaces in London and San Francisco; Sun City Girls' trance travelogues on DVD; Maja Radjic's opera in Oslo
The Inner Sleeve Terry Traerfetz on Styx
Go To: Our monthly Netrawl

On Location 82

Marke B
Berlin, Germany
Termite Club 2003 20th Anniversary Festival
Leeds, UK
Sounding Beijing 2003
Beijing, China
Terraplane Plus
London, UK
Instal 03
Glasgow, UK
All Tomorrow's Parties
Los Angeles, USA
Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival
Huddersfield, UK

Soundcheck

This month's selected CDs, vinyl and singles

The Table Of The Elements label celebrates its tenth birthday with a specially engraved series of LPs from John Fahey, Loren Connors, Arnold Dreyblatt and more. By Edwin Pouncey



Lapsed guitarist: composer Arnold Dreyblatt

VARIOUS

THE LANTHANIDES

TABLE OF THE ELEMENTS TOTE 66 69 69LPL

For the past ten years, American independent label Table Of The Elements has been steadily compiling a catalogue that today reads like a Who's Who of experimental and outsider music. By largely concentrating on artists whose work is closely connected to guitars and drones, TOTE have managed to coax some seriously big underground names such as Tony Conrad, Rhys Chatham and Elaine Radigue into releasing groundbreaking collections, along with new talent whose music treads a similar path. One memorable early project was the label's Guster Series, a box of white vinyl 7" singles featuring specially commissioned solos from an impressive range of guitarists, including Keith Rowe, Davey Williams, Keiji Haino and Hans Reichel. That set quickly sold out and, despite pleas for a CD reissue, remains out of print. The same fate undoubtedly awaits TOTE's latest project, *The Lanthanides*, created to commemorate the label's tenth anniversary.

TOTE's ambitious packaging raises almost every release to the level of fine art and *The Lanthanides* is no exception. Here are the first six of a proposed set of 14 single-sided, limited edition LPs, pressed on clear or transparent vinyl that have been screenset on the reverse in glow-in-the-dark or metallic ink, and packaged in clear vinyl sleeves. The dictionary definition of Lanthanides is "a class of 15 chemically related elements with atomic numbers from 57 to 71". Sure enough, they virtually correspond with the chosen catalogue numbers.

The overall visual and musical effect of the first six records is akin to opening up an ancient book of alchemical lore whose thick vinyl pages, showing engravings of the wind, planets and astrological signs, have been illuminated by some diabolical secret order. The magical aura surrounding the discs carries over into the music they contain.

Opening the series is Georgian improvisational quartet San Agustín whose TOTE debut was the

ambitious three CD set *The Expanding Sea*. The group's contribution to *The Lanthanides*, *Transmutation (Hoop And Mouth Blues)* (TOTE6 LP), is more successful, condensing all their best elements into a single side of blues infected drone music. After an opening meditative ramble, San Agustín pause before launching into a radiant drone, which subtly changes shape to allow a gallery of sound images to invade the imagination. Drummer Brian Fielden subconsciously imitates the dull throb of a helicopter rotor blade as guitarists David Daniell and Andrew Burnes bring chord crescendos crashing down, leaving them to echo on into the run-out groove.

The echo intrudes on Loren Connors's luminous *The Murder Of Saint Joan* (TOTE5 LP). Connors's minimalist guitar playing technique allows for every part of the instrument and the environment he's playing it in to be sucked into a piece. Towards the end of what initially sounds like an intense tuning exercise, he suddenly conjures up a fearful ball of noise that roars from the depths of a troubled and tormented soul.

Equally dream inducing are the four pieces that make up the late John Fahey's *Hard Time Empty Bottle Blues* (1-4) (TOTE6 LP), recorded on 8 November 1996 at the Empty Bottle in Chicago as part of TOTE's Yttrium Festival. Here Fahey taps into the spirit world of the blues, using his instrument like a six-stringed ouija board to communicate directly with such departed heroes as Charley Patton and Skip James. The result is as intensely satisfying as it is eerie. It's as though, in a state of trance, Fahey's fingers are being controlled by other forces. What really comes through, though, is just how far he had altered his personal sound – breaking it down, bending it out of shape and extending the ringing gaps between chords – to the point it only barely resembled the fretboard exuberance of his early Tokyo recordings. On these late instrumentals he sounds more relaxed and at peace.

Johnnie Kasper's *Humany Of The Planets* (TOTE6 LP), as realised by New York computer technician and composer Laurie Spiegel, has finally been made available. Originally commissioned in 1975 by Dr Carl

Sagan, Kasper's composition was included on the legendary golden record that was launched into outer space on board the Voyager 2 spacecraft. Now well beyond Pluto's orbit, the piece has remained out of earshot for Earth dwellers ever since. Now Spiegel's version brings it back home. Kasper's original creative commitment to a literal "music of the spheres" is kept intact here, allowing the sensation of the music's cosmic journeying to beam through.

The alternative guitar music theme (on the Connors and Fahey discs) comes over into the work of Portuguese musician, sound engineer and visual artist Rafael Toral, whose *Harmonic Series* (TOTE6 LP) deploys an electric guitar as a sound generator. For this feedback composition, he raises a low level ambient hum that without slowly like an electric eel in the reverberating depths of Toral's aquarium of sound. Flashes of Rhys Chatham, Jim O'Rourke and Christian Fennesz (all of whom Toral has collaborated with) can be detected here. His music also suggests the low frequency sonic ceremonies currently staged by groups like *The Melvins* and *Swm 000*.

Completing this first batch of *Lanthanides* releases is composer Arnold Dreyblatt's *Point Source/Lapse* (TOTE6 LP). His two pieces in just intonation for electric guitar, bass violin, cembalo, percussion and brass suggest a recreation of La Monte Young's early Theater Of Eternal Music ensemble. Dreyblatt's approach to just intonation, however, is much more playful and involved, with all the musicians slotting precisely together like pieces in a musical jigsaw. These pieces reveal a lust for precision and mechanical musical tempo that leans closer to Steve Reich than Young; but when Dreyblatt's thrilling complex harmonics come together on the almost rack charged "Lapse", then any similarities with his New York contemporaries quickly disappear.

Exquisitely presented and carefully curated, *The Lanthanides* shows just how far Table Of The Elements – and the music the label passionately supports – has progressed over the past decade. The project will be resumed and completed later this year. □

MASAYO ASAHARA SAINT AGNES FOUNTAIN DISC: AGNES/ACALACATION 997 CD

BY JULIAN COWLEY

Sometime 1: In 1974 Masayo Asahara took time off from completing her Master's degree on American minimalism at the University of Osaka, entered the France Film Studio with a small group of friends and recorded a drone-Prog jazz tour de force that for 30 years has been neglected in some obscure recess of the Japanese underground. Now retrieved and released under the supervision of Martin Archer, it stands up remarkably well, testifying to Asahara's immersion in the music of Faust and Soft Machine, as well as to La Monte Young and Tony Conrad. Today the accompanying notes claim she's based in the electronic music studio of Sheffield University. The title *Saint Agnes Fountain* springs from Asahara's painted studies in medieval Japanese art and pagan imagery in postmodern hymnal writing.

Sometime 2: Sheffield composer Martin Archer got together with a group of friends and recorded an hour-long piece that displays his enduring interest in Faust and Spaced-era Soft Machine, as well as his taste for the granular end of the minimalist spectrum. For reasons undiscussed they decide to present the results as a lost Japanese underground classic. Thus Archer is transformed into Masayo Asahara, tenor saxophonist Mick Beck becomes Meiji Benio, trumpeter Derek Sack — Dennis Sawamura, Clarke Collier — producer Churchi Dashi, and so on. Instant! For Eastern dreams, crowned with a title that alludes to "Good King Wenceslas."

My money's on the latter, but intrigued by the sleeve's indistinct portrait of Asahara at Stonedog, I checked Sheffield University's electronic study Webpage and found no mention of her. Stopped of its esoteric aura, how does the music sound? Filtered organ rolled into looping metallic notation forms the spine. It's thickened with feedback and rock drum to hypnotic effect, then swooshed again until vocalized from the Mike Ruffedge primer cuts across the grain, precipitating an eruption of tension and squalling sibil. A thrilling few key meander back to the celestial organ swirl, return to bass and drums and eventual descent into the fade. A drone-Prog jazz tour de force, then, destined undoubtedly to be hailed as a classic from the Northern underground when, 30 years from now, it's ressed by an Osaka based label, overseen by Masayo Asahara.

AU RECYCLING LOCALIST 99 CD

CHRIS DELAUNAY
THE NIGHT I MET MARIA C. _____
LOCALIST 94 CD

ERDEM HELVACIOGLU A WALK THROUGH THE BAZAR LOCALIST 99 CD

REYNOLDS RAMPANTANZA RONIL REMPELENTE LOCALIST 99 CD

BY JACKSON BROWN

Insatiable by Leastest bass Dawson Proffitt, the Met List is a cornucopia of artists' field recordings of their chosen urban environment and the composer pieces they created in response to them. The results aren't exactly explicit for most

city dwellers but they're fascinating nonetheless, with each CD depicting and layering sound to evoke place in the way a film director might to establish mood and location. Largely sliding to their own backyards, multimedia artists as sincerely capable as Dutch being occasion through The Hague encountering a random, a marching band, voices the thumping beat of a dance club. Argentine artist Tito Teyajays work with the vibrating jackhammer issue of a construction crew, electronic composer Eren Helvacioğlu set down in a Turkish bazaar lazily free of its stallholders' chaoticness (multilingual barter) and voice documentarist Chris Delaunay records the sound of unspecified release being hauled through a Seattle dump.

Sample-heavy prelections notwithstanding, the relations between source recordings and the artists' accompanying "textbook" compositions aren't always clear. The Reynold piece is particularly disorienting: The way their stationer-buzzing gives way to tinkling keyboards and sinister yet gliding strings is only marginally more compelling listening than their jackhammer crew move. On the Delaunay disc, the only obvious connection between field recording and answer piece is a chat about carpet dining, run alongside a fascinating sonic collage of directions, partly self talk, arguments of a day cleaner, complaining drivers at a Moroccan karaoke singing, a drum ensemble and African chanting.

For his companion work, Helvacioğlu raises liberally sampled market chatter with low key Ambient Techno record of Boards Of Canada or Newtune and Aul's punningly titled "Recycling" is a spunky Ambient piece that recalls early great Knutskat. Unfortunately like the other sonic environments mapped here by the Met List series, most of them dotting in around 30 minutes, both need more time to unfold and tell their stories.

DEREK BAILEY POETRY & PLAYING MINTHROP 1162 CD

BY BRIAN MORRIS

"Sometimes beauty from my attention by endeavor" wrote Lin Hixson in "Writing Is As Ad To Memory". Her line almost serves as a motto for Derek Bailey's career. After the drum 'n' bass, the avant rock and the ballads, here's the poetry album. As a ballading artist, with a generous philosophy of improvisation, it makes perfect sense. Though most often cast as a leader, or maybe co-lead, Bailey is also a deep listener.

His long endurance has almost always been in the presence of other artists, sometimes audible, sometimes in the deep background, even more so by Thore Busch of The Spirit Of Jazz to seamless sonorous interludes. The latter may somewhat hint, in these guitar improvisations and ruminations from three very different points. The lineage is most obvious in the tracks derived from Peter Riley's "Lines Of The Liver", perpetually the words of an old tramp called John Dooley speaking in a disconnected cadence on the North Staffordshire moors. Their added intelligence and alternate wisdom and fitness are a perfect foil to Bailey's guitar playing.

The opening piece by Lin Hixson is more overtly playful, even to the dissonant cast of the poetry is dogmatic. She is a lyricist at heart and a very good one. There isn't a regular list of words in the whole thing but her

musicality is evident even without the accompaniment.

Which is the wrong word, of course. Bailey is not providing a musical background to the poets work, but an extension of it into dimensions not covered for in language. That is evident on the pieces from Steve Delaney's A Superintendents Eyes, which is described by the artist as a "typical ambient mystique, a la corporate poster" into the heart of New York, it's the least immediately engaging of the disc's two elements, but it's also the one on which Bailey's contribution is most integral.

Poetry & Playing comes in at less than half an hour, which is not much of anyone's time. Whether you'd want to listen to it frequently or indeed a second time, is an open question. It spays some extended attention and DB fans will appreciate the low-DB approach. Of course, he's done this kind of thing before. Remember the historically significant delivery of Arthur Schopenhauer's "The Last Chord" on Fiftieth Avenue's influential *Compilations*?

FS BLUMM UCHTEN AUDIO DRESS: ADRER 60

BY KEITH MOULNE

The delightfully poised acoustic album follows Berlin guitarist Frank Schueffels' 2002 release *Amor*, on the stimulating electronic label Stuttgart. Aside from some extremely discrete loops and treatments, however, little here connects Blumm with guitarists like the Fennesz or Josef Suess. Uchten is a collection of gurgling instruments built around lush but simple six string patterns, embellished with beautifully recorded harmonium, piano, woodwind and occasional drums.

A generous, human album, it is nevertheless a very sad one. Blumm manages perfectly to evoke these strangely comforting moments of loneliness and loss when tears prick the backs of your eyes and your lower lip develops a Leslie Howard-style quiver yet, remarkably, the music is able to sustain or manipulate (unlike some of the superficially similar work of Wim Rieley, for example), there's a slight acidity about some of the chords he plays that destabilises the material in interesting ways. While not remotely dissonant, these moments undercut the prevailing mood of charming melancholy to hint at something deeper, darker, more troubling. A parallel might be the work of Hozier, which shares a sense of innocence forced into too willingly raw introspection. Also to be appreciated is the sophistication of Blumm's arrangements. His melodic motifs rise organically from within their colorful harmonic patterns rather than being imposed from above, allowing the listener to focus closely on the timbre of the instruments.

Blumm's deft layering and placement of instruments in the soundfield is also extremely impressive. On "On One On", an almost subliminal digital tinkling rouses at intervals to bind its various sections together — a mournful woodwind chorus, a quietly dramatic passage for reed and harmonium, and a stately prelude for bang. "Verling" pits sprightly toy piano against languorous guitar to fabulous effect. Throughout the album, his attention to textual detail and the low key beauty of his deployment of a small pool of instruments combine in a variety of

ambiances make Uchten a sensual and moving listening experience.

MATTHEW BOURNE THE ELECTRIC DR M SOUND RECORDINGS SOUNDHOUSE CD

BY JULIAN COWLEY

When Miles Davis cut a cup of Sly and a pinch of Stockhausen into his driving electric cloudlines he created a volatile haze that spilled over mightily and is still being mopped up and seasoned. The Electric Dr M is one such saturated morsel, an eight-part exercise in jazz funk ambience, drawing heavily on James Hancock's reduction of the style. Matthew Bourne's former Rhodes piano is the period ingredient, plugging directly into an early 1970s sound stream of jagged out reverb and rhy modulation. Californian experimentalist Eric Gluck Rennie has performed extraordinary mutations on the Rhodes, but played straight here the instrument can't escape its own history. For Bourne's purposes that's its strength. He also uses analogue synthesizers but doesn't opt for simple parody or indulgence in uncomplicated nostalgia; he registers an identifiable atmosphere and shapes it to current requirements.

Rean Valco supplies a warm and sticky double bass tone, and feeds in occasional samples around the periphery. Drummers Dave Black and Sam Hobbs strut and shuffle on the corner or slide into more slippery beats. Gustav Erik Shirley is a more esoteric presence, an enervating element reduced to period-style tempo, rather than memory loss. MacLaughlin's fire or the irremovable curtain of Stanley Rose Copey supplied by Miles Davis. Shirley's rapid slide welcome disinterest to the group's identity as, reeling under the influence, they find their own way home.

PETER BRÖTZMANN & WALTER PERKINS THE INK IS GONE SNO 313

BORGSMANN/BRÖTZMANN/ PARKER/BAKR THE COOLER SUITE GROB 999 CD

BY JULIAN COWLEY

Exposure to American jazz just opened seagullpoint Peter Brötzmann's musical footprints, and nearly 40 years on his expressive torrent shows no sign of abatement. Brötzmann was an art student in Wuppertal when the newton came and his signature phrases — squaky lettering, broad, bold and textured designs and hands-on application — continue to mark his packaging of his releases to the music world. Initially, he ran his own label, Bib, issuing *For Adolphus Sax* and *Machine Gun* before becoming a key member of the FMP pool.

Now, under the aegis of Enrnta, Brötzmann has recruited Bib to issue limited, numbered editions of sessions in fields special, on prime vinyl, in silk-screened card covers that have a feel as well as a look. The format is rarely ideal for the fabric of his music, his sustained respiratory eruption and breathal ruff that pour the air physically on to the listener. Time-lagged trio Bib was a duo with Peter Brötzmann, a jazz drummer who performed with Rahsaan Roland Kirk and Charles Mingus among others. The album draws on two sessions, one in Boston, the other in



Tiny organ: Tom Johnson

**TOM JOHNSON
ORGAN AND SILENCE**
ANTS AGE CD

RAKU SUGIYATTI

FUTATSU
IMPROVISED MUSIC FROM JAPAN 1960/69/9 2XCD

John Stevens used to say, "people want to play". He was referring partly to the incessant activity of musicians, always doodling in silences, drumming on tables, the professional equivalent of compulsive hand-washing. But there was a deeper theme, related to the emergence of music that dispensed with authority figures. Stevens recognised that this hard won freedom unleashed a loquaciousness bordering on hysteria.

In his improvisation workshops of the early 1970s, Stevens devised exercises to counter this problematic aspect of leaderless music. In the transition between from jazz and what we now call improvisation, hyper-communication gradually calmed. The residue was a set of unspoken rules based on humanistic ideals. Dialogue should be civilised, a democratic exchange; all parties could contribute; all should be heard. So the language of improvisation was shaped in order to best fulfil this utopia.

Audiences played that part, through an understandable desire to hear development, fullness, a range of materials. Though Webern and Cage were ghosts at the feast, so was the John Coltrane who learned his trade in hard bop. If Stevens were still alive, maybe he would have modified his statement. Some people still want to play, but some don't, even when they do.

Reasons for distinguishing between composition and improvisation are diminishing fast, yet there are still differences, as these two approaches to the problem of silence in music demonstrate. Quietists among you will not find it hard to untangle the identity merge of guitarist Taku Sugimoto and trombonist Radu Malfatti. To me, the name suggests one of John Oswald's Bang Songsproch hybrid grotesques.

Similarly, some might hear the music as compounding individual tendencies into caricature, with two strong positives creating an absolute negative.

Some truth in that perhaps? Yes, it's a very silent experience, though empty in the best sense, I would

argue. This duo emerged from a meeting of minds. Doing, being busy and achieving are all overvalued in Europe and modern Japan. "Can we not think of the aim of life as being simply to see?" asked John Gray in his book, *Straw Dogs*. In this context, change "see" to "listen". For both players, the silences are unbelieved, activity and noise turning silence into irrelevance.

Despite this mutual sympathy, I sense overlapping variations. Malfatti, the veteran, abhors the gabby, the prate, the ingratiatingly entertaining; Sugimoto expresses anxiety over the absorption of music into routine, cliché, background noise, empty style.

What is heartening about their recent records is the heroic scale of the task. From a tiny audience, only the smallest minority will listen to such extremes of non-playing. Disc one, "Hibitsu", is a studio creation lasting 71.18", guitar recorded in Tokyo, trombone recorded in Vienna, then the two halves mixed in Vienna by Malfatti. Both players use only a few tones, so sparsely distributed throughout the piece that the relationship of notes seems beyond the listener's comprehension.

Can formal relationships be maintained over such durations? Logically, yes, since shorter durations are normalised through our repeated experience of recordings and performances. Surely we can learn to hear differently, concentrate harder, make connections over silences whose trajectories are qualitative in themselves. After three listens I find the silences act as a sustaining power, a rest (each with its own content) that carries with it memory of the past without expectations of the future.

Of one isolated note, Sugimoto is recognisable. Of course, some bad players can be named after just one note, but for his tone and clarity to ring through in this acoustic Antarctica is remarkable. At one point he plays a short flurry. The ordinary becomes shocking. This makes me think of sound artists such as Rolf Julius and Felix Hess, whose work explores extremes of perception.

Disc two contains two live tracks: "Rhiiz", from Vienna, and "Appel", from Tokyo. Both are names of venues. Both expose the conditions under which such music has to survive. Rhiiz is a small bar, as with virtually all European venues these days, the audience cannot keep quiet. The compulsion to talk rather than listen has become a disease without a

Two more CDs at the threshold of human hearing. Could the aim of life be simply to listen, asks David Toop

cure. Shut up or go home.

More enjoyable for me is the second track, in which the Tokyo audience listens with acute attention (equally pathological, some might say). Cars drive by. Is there a toy piano in the room? We hear air sustains, a plucked note, a sharp noise, a blurred note. Pitch intervals play on the nervous system to revelatory effect.

In his notes to *Organ And Silence*, composed in 2000 and performed here by Wesley Roberts, Colorado born composer Tom Johnson writes: "Many composers talk about the importance of silence in music, but one does not actually hear much of it in the classical repertoire, or any other repertoire. In fact, silences longer than three seconds are extremely rare in all kinds of music." This accords with published statements by Sugimoto and Malfatti, yet Johnson's approach feels less radical.

Once a student of Morton Feldman, he is concerned with how little he can notate and still sustain interest. This suggests a more generous concession to the audience, though Johnson admits a growing appreciation of silences as singular entities, along with a decision to "permit as much silence as possible, without allowing the music to actually stop".

His piece lasts for 61.50" and begins with a flourish. The activity decreases, contained in sections of block chords or pure, relatively neutral tones played in repeated clusters, phrases or single bursts. Recorded in the Chapel of the Sisters of Loretto in Kentucky, the ambience (and instrument) courts ecclesiastical associations. *Messiah's* organ meditations are never far away. Inevitably, this enfolds the debatable view that silence is somehow more spiritual than not-silence. *Organ And Silence* is a dramatically effective work, though it sits more comfortably within a tradition than *Futatsu*.

This is truly difficult music to analyse, or live with, though clearly there is a lot to be said. From this experiential and intellectual richness, I find it far more substantial than the work of an artist like Mark Strand, creator of *The Lights Turning On And Off*. We could ponder on the fact that Credo might headily be argued over in pub talk, thanks to the Turner Prize, whereas near-silent music subsists at the far edges of obscurity. Something fucked up in the culture? □

Philadelphia in Spring 2002. Though it opens with *Beethoven* on the message, there are also plenty of subdued passages. Peters offers yelps of encouragement and appreciation, and responds at the kit with a veteran's gale. Beethoven, an earnest and brightly as well as alto and tenor sax, waxes pace and mood to offer the broadest invitation he can to the attentive drummer.

The *Circle Suite* was recorded in January 1997 at the New York performance space of that name on the first cassette tape. The sound quality is, as Tobias Rapp comments in his sleeve notes, "somewhat faded up." He also remarks, quite rightly, that this low-grade recording corresponds very well to the music's directness and intensity. It's not simply that the energy of this potent quartet ultimately transcends the tape's limitations. Its circling balance, muck, splash and splatter is faithful to the spirit of the event in ways that higher fidelity could not achieve. Ripport accuracy is not the issue, the collective drum of two horn players, bassist and drummer is the music's substance. William Parker's bass pulses insistently in the foreground. Thomas Bergmann and Beethoven spar and collide on their various reeds, or melt into a curtain of noise. Through it, drummer Rashad Baker somehow conveys lightness of touch as well as steering energy. Technologies will have no limitations. Listeners with a taste for acoustic submergence or the fabulous coarseness of the Beethoven gain will simply love it.

**CHRIS BURN'S ENSEMBLE
ENSEMBLE AT MUSICA
GENERA 2002**
MUSICA GENERA MILAUS CO CD
BY BRIAN MAULBY

The group that pianist Chris Burn took to Szczecin, Poland, to play at Musica Genera 2002 was a stripped-down version of his regular Ensemble. Accompanying him were Matt Hutchinson on synthesizer and electronics, harpist Rhodi Ganes and John Butcher on tenor and soprano saxophones. They were joined in Poland by classical flautist Charles and cellist Nikos Veliotis, both of whom had also been booked for the festival.

Burn and Butcher share a long history and a close musical understanding. It's worth remembering that when they first launched themselves on improvis in the late 1970s, their music was deemed too radical, even for such a supposedly radical scene. Ensemble discs have always seemed at one remove from live improvis art-scenescenic dance, and this, their fifth, is no exception. In a sense, the music dances around the difficulties that bog other improvisers down. The strong reductionism that informs "adagio," a guided improvisation by Nikos Veliotis, fits well with the pieces by Burn that feature high-flow volume musical juxtapositions and interludes of silence, as well as the most forcefully interactive of the group improvisations, "torquage," which ends the CD. *Musica Genera 2002* is not only a surprisingly dense experience, but a rich one too.

**CHRISTIAN CALON &
RADIO DUMAS
RADIO DUMAS MOVIES
NO. 10000 2002**
BY BRIAN MAULBY

The idea of a Canadian road movie may conjure up perversely disturbing images of defensive

driving, speed limits rigidly observed and perfectly nice people encountered along the way. For the most part, that's what Calon and Dumas deliver in these two discs realized for Radio Canada's *L'Espace Ou Son* and *Deutschland Radio* in Berlin.

Made for the former, *Le Petit Homme Gens* (Little) presents its road material with a minimum of improvisation. Wind, birds, crutches of conversation, background amnesia from a three-hour's reunion and staidness in Manitoba contribute to a gently bumpy cross-country journey. At times the spirit of R. Murray Schafer's site-specific music is invoked but without his ambitious grandiose. The key emphasis here is on the human trace in the landscape. An awesome landscape acoustic, stirred by breaths of air and occasional bird twitters, is suddenly transformed by the Occipetal wear of a freight train, human voices are caught either in the loose shadows of a camper van or in the endless echo chamber of Gurney Canyon.

And so it goes, gentle and strangely uninviting. Like a long distance journey when fatigue and a drift of attention leaves the miles by in effortless boredom. On "Documents De Surface," the human archaeology is minimal, replaced by animal and weather sounds. Canadian Pacific still puts in an appearance, but the action is more specific with rich naturalistic textures interspersed with choric effects from toads and watercooses and the odd radio noise provided by bees.

As a studio experience, these are doubtless compelling pieces. They're more troublesome on CD. They could have done with some visual enhancement, possibly a CD-ROM of location photography or a virtual map of selected routes.

**CHICAGO UNDERGROUND
TRIO
THORN
THORN, JOCKEY THRIILL 136 CD
BY DAVID STUBBS**

The Chicago Underground trio's Rob Mazurek (cornet, laplats), Noel Rupersmith (bass, laplats) and Chad Taylor (jazz) mix mid-1960s jazz sensibilities with contemporary technology. It's a somewhat schizophrenic combination that resolves itself on their third album more benignly than you might expect.

The opening "Protest" removes the spirits of Don Cherry, Charlie Haden and Ed Blackwell. A wordless but explicit anti-war piece, its agitated sound furms cut across the more solemn bass swaths in which it is consciously intended as a depiction of a demonstration broken up by police with dogs and billy clubs. Although the responses are supposed to be a largely contemporary — this music was conceived and written in a single day, shortly after the invasion of Iraq began — you might suspect that what's being harboured here is a fleeting, almost morbid nostalgia for the spectacular confrontations of the late 60s, the violent zenith of the protest movement.

That's exacerbated by — doubtless in good faith — the undulations, rhythmic shifts and acoustic wiles of a bygone avant jazz duo "Sensu" and "Shoe Lace" heartie fast backward over similar terrain, while begging the question why? Perhaps the precise value and significance of the sort of homage are assuaged by the quality and frantic energy of the playing, however. Perhaps

also the purpose of this revision is to revive, rather than merely wallow in, the radical, confrontational spirit of the era signified here.

Most interesting from a musical/alchemical point of view are the pieces incorporating electronics, like the title track, where a solemn cello peel rises like income from a furious burst of compressed preling "Parasite" is made from found sounds in the Seattle artists' fairmarket. The opening doses of "Zigzag" are as low key as almost accidentally incorporated the cement room clanging around the road into the track. Or there's "Kite", a flickering backdrop of computer generated sounds against which the trio improvise. All well and experimental, but this record's 'unlabeled' parts, eddy and under the present, thought circumstances, are its most vital.

**CONDITIONS
A BRIGHT NOWHERE
MARCH 1998 WITH CD
BY JULIAN COWLEY**

The quiet conditions is Nathaniel Catchpole on tenor saxophone, trumpeter Jamie Coleman, pianist Neil James, John Edwards on double bass and Eddie Prevost at the drums. Prevost is, of course, a longtime exponent of collective improvising, neither with AMM, and Edwards too is an experienced practitioner. Neither so much as hats at coercion of their younger collaborators towards a particular style. The collective imperative, however, is clearly shared by all, instead of absorbed in their workshop sessions and performances. It's not just a matter of listening intently and responding. An individual response has to enable other responses, to be generative and suggestive rather than definitive or merely equivocal. And once the ensemble as generatively expressive the first individual vibrations register a collective pulse.

Catchpole, Coleman and James are not imitative players although they are obviously well informed in the possibilities made available through jazz and free improvisatory music. Coleman often unites short lines and linked strings of notes that very effectively ride the pulsative bounce of Prevost's drumming. James is more laterally inclined, pursuing implications, scoring and investigating what's faded or dislocated. Catchpole is more overtly expressive, melodic and dramatic, favouring edgy natural blowing that modifies mood as much as direction. It's a situation in which Edwards sounds entirely at home, unobtrusively but actively engaged in living relationships, drawing other voices together or prompting them to move on. Like the title, the music often suggests the self-regulating aspect of utopian community.

**BOBBY CONN &
THE GLASS GYPSIES
THE HOMELAND
THRIILL, JOCKEY THRIILL 137 CD
BY GREGA DAVILA**

Mantic self-styled rock 'n' roll answer Bobby Conn has always been an anomaly among his more adroit post-rock labelmates on Chicago's Thriill Jockey. Though *The Homeland's* Chicago trio features Terence John McEntire on recording, meaning, and occasionally percussion, and includes band the Glass Gypsies playing a bewildering array of instruments — from Polysepsy to star guitars to tambourines — the contributions of others never eclipse Conn's

unmistakable identity and complete megalomania. *The Homeland*, a volatile mixture of Diamond Dogs-style glam stomp, strutting genre hog, and plastic soul disco pop, plus wacky sound effects and a madcap parade or two, is, for better or worse, pure Conn in spades. Add a political theme involving George Bush and the Illuminati to an already heady brew, and you've got the recipe for a potential catastrophe of Brad Pitt-style proportions.

Fortunately, a strong grasp of rock songwriting takes *The Homeland* from being a 40-car ton pile-up, but leaves it poised precariously on the brink of collapse, never quite allowing the album to the level that Conn's obvious ambition insists it should. Thankfully he's clever enough to defuse the potentially preachy self-righteousness of his pointed lyrics by singing from the perspective of the American President rather than from the perspective of the protester, and lapsing often into self-mockery. *The Homeland* is an enjoyable enough rock album, but with lyrics like "Bob, there'll be no winning for the next attack/Reale, and there's a dropout or your income tax", this is a record with a built-in sell-by date.

**CURLEW
MERCURY
CUNIFORM RAINY CD
BY KEITH HOLME**

George Cartwright's career has existed in various forms for the best part of two decades, and has included heavyweights such as Michael Fred Firth and the late poet Ian Carr. This most recent album ups the fusion ante, being looser, more powerful and less academic than earlier efforts.

"Still" and its reprise "Still Still" arrive in a blaze of spluttering guitar over an insistent one-note bass pulse, giving way to fabulous asymmetric sax melodies and melodramatic organ obbligatos. Curlew's music is serious fun, when the spine, wild funk of "Funky Mercury" collapses into a Mahavishnu-style ecstatic breakdown, for example, one imagines the musicians' faces fused in giddy delight rather than beatific transcendence. There's more for tenderness, too — "There Is" washes a somber swaying baseline with chance guitar ambience, sounding like late night stamming off a Bowery sidewalk. On a far less occasions the album recalls Ornette Coleman's Prime Time, in particular "Late October," which possesses the light-headed bounce of something off Virgin Beauty, though mercifully devoid of that album's sleazy disco sheen.

Cartwright's urbane production allows the instrumental contributions of those great players to shine. The most welcome of these is Fred Chelera's fast harmonies scratch away in a way that with Cartwright's overblown sax on "Loren" is astonishing. Chris Parker's on-key keyboards look horns with Dean Gano's impetuous guitar on "Call". In a moment of wild, spilling synchronicity, On the closing "Song Of Now", the pair manage to approximate the surrealistic slide guitar interplay of Beefheart's Magic Band. Cartwright himself is on top form, agile, probing, never settling. Some may harbor after the compositional and improvisational freedom, the wit and directness of this unpretentious album offers simple pleasures, and they're no less pleasurable for that.

As blues and gospel singers drink from the well of misery, Peter Shapiro asks why God gets all the best tunes



Left: *Babylon* in a box. Right: The Sacred Harp Singers

VARIOUS GOODBYE, BABYLON DUST-TO-DIGITAL 07001 8KXCD

In mock imitation of an old hymnbook, *Goodbye, Babylon* calls itself "The most complete assortment and collection of sacred music yet published". Although it focuses almost exclusively on prewar American Christian music, it would be hard to argue. This utterly rapturous (albeit thoroughly gluttonous) collection of 136 sacred songs and 25 sermons features many of the big names responsible, but too rarely credited, for creating the lingua franca of modern music (Mahalia Jackson, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Blind Willie Johnson – people who should be in every record collection regardless of denomination) as well as equally obscureties like Roosevelt and Aaron Gravies ("maybe the greatest tambourine player on record"). The Johnson Family Singers, Luther Mayby, AA Gray & Seven Fold Bitty, etc. Perhaps as a concession to worldliness, *Goodbye, Babylon* is as beautifully presented as one of Father Divine's consorts: the CDs are packaged in a wooden box with a reproduction of a Gustave Doré etching, surrounded by raw cotton and accompanied by a 200 page book with transcriptions of every song, choice Bible quotations and essays and commentary by such reissue luminaries as Dick Spottswood, Charles Wolfe, Anthony Heikbut, Kim Lorrain, Deol Louis Nations and Current 93's David Tibet.

The hardest thing to do when writing about sacred recordings is, as Dave Marsh wrote in *The Heart Of Rock & Soul*, to "find a way of contextualising them without trivialising them". To approach them as mere folkloric curiosity or agglomeration of sounds seems somehow callous, like a refusal to meet this music more than halfway. On the other hand, to judge them on their faithfulness to scripture or on their "effectiveness" does a great disservice to the musician, however divinely inspired he or she might have been. Part of the problem is that the religious sublime has been expressed in so many different tongues, timbres and traditions – from the rough and ragged voices and searing rhythmic drive of Elders

McIntosh and Edwards through the ethereal, 'Apollo's lyre' sound of Washington Phillips's homemade instrument that's reminiscent of a cello, and the chorus of angels somehow conjured by the duo of James And Martha Carson, to the comedic repertage of calypsonian Roaring Lion (to say nothing of the whirling dervish trance rituals of the Middle East, Africa and Asia, Jewish cantorial recitals, etc, not represented here) – and the subject is so emotive that it's impossible to create a set of objective criteria. How to find language appropriate to speak of the greatest glories known to humankind? It's all too tempting to quote Matthew 13:43 ("Who hath ears to hear, let him hear") and leave it at that.

Of course, the musicians included here have found just such a language, so much so that it often eclipses the majesty they're singing about. This is such gorgeous, moving, vital, sensuous music, such a testament to the human spirit that it's a shame to drag God into it. Maybe it's just that the techniques and textures of so much religious music have been thoroughly assimilated into the pop mainstream, but it's remarkable how earthy this music sounds, how content it is to wallow in the mud. On the rare occasions when the music here does get 'otherworldly' (Washington Phillips's two contributions and the several examples of Sacred Harp singing) it sounds more 'alien' than heavenly, more strange than sanctified.

Of course, even the more earthbound stuff sounds pretty weird too. Has there ever been a presence on record as strong, as singular as Blind Willie Johnson? Both of his tracks here ("Take Your Burden To The Lord And Leave It There" and "Lord I Just Can't Keep From Crying") feature his bloodcurdling, infernal croak and strangely jaunty, but ever so subtle, slide guitar. They display the most intense physicality – as though Johnson is trying to fully occupy every inch of his body and experience the world in defiance of his blindness. Reading his tragic life story (he was blinded as a young child when his mother threw pe in his face during a fight with his father; his house burned down in the 40s and he died of pneumonia while sleeping in its remains) only adds more force to the music of this

most powerful of singers.

As Johnson's records indicate, another remarkable facet of this collection is how bleak so much of it is. Paradise sounds so distant from these fervent, believers as it does from the most devout atheist, blavians 65:14 may say, "My servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit," but it sounds like the exact opposite is true. The most extraordinary recording here must be Jimpson's "No More, My Lord", a work song recorded by Alan Lomax at Mississippi's Parchman Farm prison in 1947. Accompanied by nothing but the regular meter of wood chopping, a prisoner named Jimpson wails with the most exquisite warble at the end of each phrase. His sound and style is not unlike Bessie Smith without the joy, and this is just about the starkest, most chilling record this side of Robert Pete Williams. The mood isn't even disturbed by a chirp of wood flying into the microphone with a third three-quarters of the way through. When these musicians do get happy (as on Blind Alfred Reed's "I Mean To Live For Jesus" and Heavenly Gospel Singers' "When Was Jesus Born?"), it's with a breeziness that feels impertinent and out of place, like it was intended for the schoolyard rather than the house of God.

Goodbye, Babylon features numerous recordings of the all too mysterious Sacred Harp singers from the Deep South. At once as elusive and foreign (and enchanting) as an old Okeechobee album from Papa New Guinea and as lived in and awkwardly out of date as your grandparents' cracked china, these Sacred Harp recordings are, along with the rather wonderful sermon CD, the true glories of this collection. The good news is that the next release from Dust-To-Digital, a new label set up by former Table Of Elements intern Steven Lance Ledbetter, will be an equally mouthwatering collection of pre-war Sacred Harp singing. But until then, this stunning set is – along with Minnie Jackson's Apollo recordings, the Shantich collections of Marian Williams and the Swan Silvertones records for Specialty – the definitive document of American religious music. □

DEERHOOF

MILK MAN
KILL ROCK STARTS PROMO CD
BY MIK CLARKE

Milk Men follow quick on the heels of Deerhoof's earlier, quirky sixth album *Apple O*, released earlier this year. The catchy downscale riff and freshly sung chorus of the title track appear signals a tighter beat for the San Francisco quartet. De Apple O, Deerhoof dropped a fractured pattern of multicoloured images into their sound at will. Milk Man privileges a coherence that, while not missing from Deerhoof's earlier recordings, indicates just how accomplished the group have become since they formed nine years ago. It's at once wackier baggier and meticulously seductive.

"Dog On The Seawall" is a brief dose of cute humor, littered with pretty electronic glitches and broken handclaps. There are tenderly laid upon a crooked canvas of obscure quotations, before being pussed into a nursery rhyme by vocalist Satoru Matsuzaki's distinctive soprano yelp. "I saw a dog on the sidewalk! He pum pum pum!" Scrambled digital drum beats are programmed to the pace of her indecipherable words. A candy coloured cacophony of energy and faux naive charm, Matsuzaki sings as though her lips are on fire and her head caked in ice.

But the most powerful development – and presence – on Milk Man is the prominent use of keyboards. Here it takes a crucial inside lead beside John Dehen's angular guitar in a constant marriage of extroverted gothic chords, played more for comic effect than intensity, are acoustically thumped out, crazy cab style here at night in "Gigs Down", while minimalist piano smooths a jazz line through the creases of "Desapareco". This way juxtaposition of extremes is what makes Deerhoof so entertaining to listen to. Matsuzaki's sly, vibro-like vocals knotted between Greg Sannes's abstract, gnarled drum beats sound obscure at first, but as they bubble with each other, they triumphantly howl beauty from the chaos of stringing guitars and arbitrary bass.

DUB NARCOTIC SOUND SYSTEM DEGENERATE INTRODUCTION K KLIPDIS CD BY MIK CLARKE

"This disco is amazing!" sings Calvin Johnson as he weaves his rough, dicy baritone round the

throbbing pulse of bass and skeletal drums on "Sounds Narcotic (Smash the Record)" opening *Degenerate Introduction*. Like every pop Johnson dips a finger into, whether it be with K Records or his other musical collaborators (DNSS meets John Sanner, Beat Happening, The Gel Bears) he always draws in ideas of a decidedly punk rock passion. Here, the off-beat dance beats provided by Chris Sather and Heather Davis, on bass and drums respectively, gliss and sidestep around his monotonous monologues, creating a continuous rhythmic pulse and driving the music forward.

Dunn takes the lead on "Fuck Me Up", a track constructed from a rambling thrush of bass soloing and casually tossed guitar chords. Her disorderly, dissonant and sonorous meandering match Johnson's, as the song dimes with a harmonic, dynamic climb during the final chorus. Like Dub Narcotic Sound Systems previous four albums, *Degenerate Introduction* is about spontaneity and simplicity, and the way the group keep their songs so simple means that the possibilities, energies and emotions to be drawn from the music feel endless – and endlessly stimulating.

JOHN DUNCAN DA SICH DIE MÄCHTIGER DE START MUSIC DMS CD BY BRIAN MORRIS

"Nothing is more infating than those words which co-ordinate" the laudatory products of a mind that has focused on just about everything except its system." The words of Romanian-born EN Ocan, a philosopher and apologist of such unrelieved fatalism that Samuel Beckett fell with him for being too pessimistic. Conan's writings – *History And Utopia*, *A Short History Of Decay*, *De The Heights Of Decay* – are well outside the academic mainstream, largely because they're comic, in a chop-falset, Buster Keatonish sort of way. Conan died after being savaged by a dog, which is almost too good to be true. No one has recorded the colour of the dog, but let's assume it was black.

His relevance here is that sound artist John Duncan has taken readings from Conan's work by fellow artist Amonia Titchens and used them as the inspiration for another of his bleak abstract soundscapes. The pair appear to have diagnosed on both methodologies and conclusions, so Titchens's voice, already treated when Duncan recorded the tapes, appears otherwise unaltered, as track three of a four part suite. "Learning From The Tyrants" is another

meditation on power and on the creative force of failure and decay. It's a subject that fits in well with Duncan's anti-humanist sense of time, which has led him to make soundscapes of geologic and barometric data, like the recent *Infra-Red-Tide*. The key element in his aesthetic, to borrow from Conan again, is the "disposal of subjectivity". The listener to *Da Sich Die Mächtiger* is slowly engulfed by a cross between the movement of wind over sand, the Hoover sounds a baby hears in the womb, and a slack CD track. Do first hearing I had to check two or three times to make sure the counter was still going.

As a CD listening experience, *Da Sich Die Mächtiger* is much less compelling than Duncan's beautiful *Keening Towers* (2003). The new work is perhaps too closely enmeshed in Duncan's procedural and philosophical disagreement with Titchens to communicate so strongly. Not much in the way of lyricism, but its irritations rooted in each hearing. It's a tough listen, even less richly textured than Duncan's shadowy masterpiece *Phantasm Broadcast*, but its nihilism dissolves when put alongside Conan's vision of a post-totalitarian world brought to its knees and restored to primal disorder. Bored in the receding pulses of the final section "Aber..." is the possibility of something new and perhaps more vital.

ELECTRELANE THE POWER OUT 100 PURE PURE CD BY DAVID STUBBS

Brighon's all female four piece Electrelane are one of a dwindling number of groups who have chosen to pervert with the indie lo-fi formula of drums, bass and guitar, as if in some sort of austere protest against excess. With *The Power Out*, Electrelane have made a transition from instrumentally to vocals and song structures. At times, it works beautifully, as on the opening "Gone Under Skin", whose wisp yorgan drones play on the horizon of this heart-line cutting like a sunset beam.

Unfortunately it's very best. Verly Sissams, who provides the vocals, sounds as if she's struggling to match the dehuman, infected tones of Sissams's Lærdia Sadler. On tracks like "Birds", it's a challenge to think that she sounds painfully unequal. "Like The Bill Between Your Teeth" is still more concussive – it's like enduring the distressed mewling of a cat up a tree and feeling helpless to assist. There are occasions when

vocal inadequacy can be more emotionally fetching than full-throated virtuosity – Billie Holiday is the supreme example. This, however, is not one of them.

But moments suggest that *The Power Out* is, while fully realised, evidence of a group in transition. The energy pick-up on the closing tracks, the striking deployment of sax on "Only One Thing Is Heavier", a throwback to the No Wave tendencies of blurt, as well as Lora Logic and the relative instrumental splendour of "You Make Me Weak As The Knees", with its plaintive howls, all suggest options not fully taken up elsewhere here for some reason.

Most arresting of all is "The Valley", a Sigfried Sassoon poem, is a choral arrangement by Sissams. It works not just because it's perhaps the most surprising use of a chorus in rock since Emilie Zentgraf's Neutrons "Haber Menadi" but because of a single again breaks that shoots across its sky like a lonely asteroid. Let's hope there's more of this next time.

EYELESS IN GAZA & LOM COXHILL HOME PRODUCE: COUNTRY BIZARRE NOR HONOR CD BY KEITH MADINE

The Logo Music cassette imprint produced some great documents of the late 70s/early 80s underground. This release is a timely reminder that the true ancestors of today's hard core Phil Spector are the bedroom overdubbers thrown up by the advent of the Portastudio. Originally featuring madhouse free gas part Lom Coxhill and pale post-punk aesthetes Eyeless In Gaza on one side each of a CD, Home Produce, here augmented by a further half-hour of sermies which merge their material into a completely new set of pieces, is a prime artefact of those innocent and exciting times.

Coxhill's original contributions are typically playful solo improvisations and full track overdub mix-ups. "The Dots Fellow's Salt" idea on a quack-herald growl whose good humour swaggers outlives so strongly through the haze and flutter of what must have been a fair number of bounce-downs that one half-expects Chris McHugh or Meagan Fiza to make an appearance. On "Looches Of Failure", he duets with himself and a host of madly analogue delays, his quackster glow allowing the piece to cover a huge range of atmospheres over its seven minutes, from



New releases from Häpna
Tape - milien
Loren Connors & David Grubbs - Arborvitae
Sagor & Swing - Allt hänger samman

Distributed by (Augs) (Uk), Forcad Exposure (USA), A-Music (Europe),
Rppie (Japan), BonnierAugs (Scandinavia)



HATUDOVY 2 699 NEW RELEASE



Wolfgang Mitterer
Häufiger Personal
Donauerschwingen

HATUDOVY 699



David Liebman
Colors

HATUDOVY 699



Archie Shepp
The Life I Know

HATUDOVY 2 699 NEW RELEASE



Jivejyoti Guffrey
Penitence
Steels & Soul

HATUDOVY 699



Danilo D'Agaro
Insta-Glitch
Han Bennink
Strandfurther

the portentous museum wall with which it opens to the bubbling swish of its latter stages, just before the tape rather charmingly runs out.

The Eyesless In Gaze pieces which originally featured are somewhat reminiscent of their more leftfield *Rule Hands* (I loved *So Well* album taking clocks and rickety struck too trays underpin heretic scapings and ghoulish melodic themes, whose murmur in the half delirious, "For Edward" has spoozy, seismic rambles and some scuzzing Fred Firth-style guitar its unfussy, direct experimentation is far more appealing to these ears than the rather historic seag album they were producing at the time.

The remixes which merge the original participants' contributions work surprisingly well, though it's certainly Eyesless's party, with Coill's natural often pitchbent and shunted around to serve as embellishments to the duo's pieces. "Wan Lighthouse" features Coill working in the upper registers over distant syndrome and a wispid drone, while "No" is as scarily statistic as anything from *Psycho: The Force The Hand Of Chance* debut album. An interesting variation might have been to fold some of their work into the general voice of a Coill impression. Even so, this album suggests that Eyesless In Gaze have been unfairly neglected for way too long.

THE FLYING LUTENBACHERS SYSTEMS EMERGE FROM COMPLETE DISORDER

TRICOLOR 2000 UNLIMITED TM1151 CD

BY IRL HEDMAN

Formerly of Chicago, the San Francisco based Flying Lutenbachers have gone through as many changes of sound as line-up. After years spent exploring 'out' jazz, screaming Death Metal, and combinations thereof, they've settled into a post-No Wave electronic noise project, with all instruments being played by the group's founder, Michael Walter. Systems Emergo, a minute long first track, "Unruly Field/Total Disorder/Cellar Chase", is a best of electronic sounds that leads into the three-part "Killing Sled" ("Killing Sled", "Killing Sled", "Killing Sled" and "Killing Sled").

These three tracks may show the influence of heavy-jerk, treble post-punk acts like Drivins and Erase Errata (both cited as linked artists in the booklet), but Walter is really stealing from *Doc At The Radar Station*—see Captain Beefheart. Except he keeps it all instrumental, and vocals proved to be neither necessary nor missed. Systems Emergo's final remaining concession to a Metal aesthetic are its track titles and the general philosophy underpinning the sounds—something about "the subconscious genesis of life" after the extinction of all earthly matter.

The final piece, "Rise Of The Indecent Belteroth", runs to 30 minutes and it isn't any kind of rock at all. It's a blend of baroque piano, thrash bass and drums, screeching reeds, and electronic hissing and popping. Systems Emergo, as finally, not as opically stomping as aggressive listeners might hope. For one, it owes a little too much to Frank Zappa's Sydner compositions of the mid-1980s. But on a level that level isn't as expressive as hell the Walter has put the something more together, track by track. And anyone who says — as Walter once did — that Black Metal has too much Wagner in it, and

wants to introduce some Xenakis, is a guy worth paying attention to.

TERUHISA FUKUDA SHAKUHACHI KINKO SCHOOL

OGORA RECORDS CD

BY CLIVE MILES

Born in 1949, Teruhisa Fukuda studied shakuhachi with that great performer of both traditional and modern Japanese repertoire, Kobachiro Nishida. Fukuda himself has been active in playing the ancient bamboo flute into the unstable world of contemporary composition, recording pieces for shakuhachi and string quartet, and performing with Japanese orchestras. However, this album is a major statement from Fukuda about his inheritance, and contains six Henkyoku pieces from the core of the solo classical tradition. These three — "Mukyo", "Koku", and "Shan-kyo" — are shakuhachi Zen explorations of emptiness. There are somewhat lighter pieces about nesting scenes, calling stage and the traditional beggar bowl opener, "Hime", Fukuda plays them all on a standard size flute, whereas many players would use longer, low pitched flutes for the Zen pieces.

In fact there's a no-nonsense fail about Fukuda. Like rapper Big Daddy Kane, he gets the job done, a brusque approach that is not inappropriate to this music with its associations of begging monks, meditation exercises and samurai discipline. Fukuda emphasises the functional rather than the ethereal. His sound is robust, sometimes rough, and we can often hear the effort required to make the note. This is a good thing, because among the dubious influences of Western concert performance is a tendency to clean up the sound and look for smoothness. There is a moment in a shakuhachi phrase when the volume drops, everything goes still, and the flute tapers between trill and silence. Fukuda doesn't seem very interested in those moments, and his phrase endings can be almost perfunctory. He is at his best with the whirling moments of the young songs on "Sokoku-no" and the steady persistence of "Mukyo", translated here as "Sunkat Quay" — "Hay Sea".

Fukuda's muscular artistry is well suited to concert performance, though I might prefer something more intimate and ambiguous for a recording. Also I can't help thinking his playing has been influenced by having to deal with the extremes and contortions routinely demanded by contemporary composers. That's another approach is offered by the late Zen monk Watazumi, or the more recent Akira Oka, both players fascinated by the dying note. But Fukuda's album is a strong performance in which these things, against precise work that's almost magic.

GRYDELAND/KLUFEN/LOVENS

THESE SIX

SCOP 512 CD

NO SPAGHETTI EDITION REAL TIME SATELLITE DATA

SCOP 512 CD

BY BRIAN MORTON

Soft music isn't music for the soft. It's tough, edge of rock that demands and repays a certain level of close attention. The No Spaghetti Edition record is as gripping as its means as possible given the density of music it eventually delivers. Tiny sounds and almost subliminal

bedtimes are all you hear at first, impossible to separate from the responsive acoustic of the Kampen Church in Oslo where it was recorded. The sonic texture slowly blows until the full ensemble is generating complex crescendos that have a mournful and urgent quality, almost Lovett's, the kind of thing you might have heard on small West Bank stations at the time of the intifada when miso and olive were over records, capturing the sense of conflict outside while the music itself went regardless.

It's an odd analogy, since the personnel, the provenance and the basic soundworld of *No Spaghetti Edition* are so unmistakably Nordic. The sounds include brass, reeds, piano, bass and percussion, so the correction to an orthodox jazz line up is established. Mostly though, instrumental sounds are only minimally affected, reliant on extended techniques of one sort and another and bathed in electronics. It's difficult to separate the players in what is intentionally a very even mix, but Arvid Dorn's trumpet, Kasper Christ's clarinet, and harmonica, and Michael Dencker's high-end saxophones (just soprano and sopranino) stand out. The other players are harder to locate. Andrea Niermann works inside the piano, Gudni Davidsen's harp sounds are light and shimmer, Rastan Harv Gyseland could almost be a other player, while Michael Barry Kluffen and percussionist Ingar Zach each play for abstract metres that are linked at rather than delivered. The record requires patience. The sentences of its early passages only become clear on a second hearing, almost like a long Germanic sentence where one has to wait an age for the verb.

Grydeland and Kluffen are the corner forces on the two record, which is guided by the wonderful percussionist Paul Lovers. His mastery of this kind of set has been more so clearly demonstrated. He is effortlessly musical, whether playing long swells of cymbal tones or constructing stacks of tones elsewhere or he is. As on Real Time Satellite Data, Grydeland doubles on the bongo and gets his husky double on a whole new significance. There are sections on the long track that which might almost be folk music, Lovett's again or some extreme far edge of flamenco. It's absolutely riveting music. Kluffen isn't always as prominent as one might expect, but his contributions are subtle and perfectly placed. We heard few more convincing improv records this year.

HOAHKI PEAK-ARA BOO

TRICOLOR 2000 UNLIMITED TM1151 CD

BY ALAN CUMMINGS

On their third album as Hashi, vocalist Haseo and koto virtuoso Midoriyo Hay have waved goodbye to their most unpredictable members, Sachiko M — though consistency is always a hugely relative term in the magic sound spectrum of any Haseo project. In the place of the divine Miss M comes Mari O, an academically trained percussionist and composer who has spent time in avant-pop art bedfellows and Otomo's Ensemble Cathode. Her largely acoustic contributions on marimba, vibraphone and xylophone are strikingly apposite, stitching together sounds and disparate instrumental textures into a new tapestry. It's the kind of group's previous incarnations. The beautiful detailed production of Haseo's songs have always had a way of blinding the listener's ear to the

these juxtapositions of genre, timidity and improvisatory process that underlie their structures.

Similarly, Hecho can sometimes come across as grossly painted automata, surface gloss concealing the freely teased mass of gears and wheels spinning away beneath. But occasionally, as on the opening "El Hashimoto," the music's complexity and virtuosity bubble up from under the dayglo mask. A dirty blues riff on electric mandolin is interrupted by the luring, noisily sound of speed screws on ice, before a handsome score and gymbal beat leads in. Koto and mandolin mesh into a highly unlikely but very convincing rock storm, while Haço sings nonsense about her cat — the DJ Hashimoto of the title — over the top.

In less skilled hands it could be a recipe for disaster, but the audacity and lack of irony with which genre conventions are defied wins over initial doubts. A couple of the tracks mistle with an overwhelming trickiness or over-emphasized postmodernism — Yag's *Yag-Emphasized* updating of the traditional koto piece "Gaden Gintaku" especially. But given the space to breathe, as on the laconic closing track "Knitting Crane," the group as a whole and Haço's voice in particular remain as beguiling as ever, that wholly distinctive enunciation weaving rhapsodic and elegant streams of spells through plucked koto and blown brass percussion.

HOOKER/MILLER/RANALDO OUT TRIOS VOL 1: MONSOON

ATMOSPHERIC ALBUM CD

BY DAVID SILLARS

"I feel an intimacy and I have no quibbles. I work with what I have... there are no answers," says drummer William Hooker, poet and drummer who has drifted through his long career from rock 'n' roll and free jazz into the outer realms of Improv. He's doubtless a man with many stories to tell, but in order to preserve the unqualified, unfringed purity of the Improv process, continues himself here in this vague yet absolute statement of (non-) intent. *Monsoon* consists of a single extended piece, recorded on two tracks live to tape at New York's Knitting Factory. The cover shot looks like a close-up of a mass of seaweed, and another pictures the trio looking subversively informal and genial. The rest is pure abstraction, up to you to make of it.

Open the door to Monsoon, however, and the music has its own, non-figurative story to tell, a three-way dialogue involving Sonic Youth. Lee Ranaldo's smoldering fringes of guitar, sometimes leaping, his sometimes sizzling out in the form of misanthropic and unrefined power chords, Ralston Miller's bass, samples and loops, drumming over obscurely live industrial noises heard from a distant hilltop and, of course, Hooker's young, scarily drumming. As for the best Improv, this music says everything and nothing. And, as ever, in its intended form it's almost a contradiction in terms, essentially an injunction to get your ass down in person next time to get the true benefit.

HYPERYAK ANGELIC WEAPONRY

SHOCKING SCISSORHEAD CD

BY CLAY BELL

Hyperyak is a collaboration between four friends, and a kind of sonic homage to Mangala. Michael Demaitre, a specialist in overtones singing, and

Jeff Hgley, who plays Tibetan singing bowls, have travelled together in Mongolia and documented the journey on an album called *Sound Mountain*. Rite player Simon Desrozier and Lawrence Casseley have together produced Colourscape Music Festivals (a sort of avant garde bouzouki card) and the Electroacoustic Cabinet for years, and Casseley has lent his sound processing skills to improvisation Ewok Parker and Barry Gay.

The most straightforward piece on *Angelic Weaponry* is "Four Mountains," where Ormiston sings a Mongolian song over his howler fiddles, Desrozier's flute spirals upwards, and Casseley eventually transforms everything into a northern lights display of cascading harmonics. "Hyperyak" is more extreme, as we travel deep into the recesses of Ormiston's throat, while Casseley's waves of Gothic electronics sound like he is rising the dead. "Heaven's Wind," inspired by a Mongolian poem, starts calmly with a low drone and builds mayhem. These three pieces are bracketed by two much longer excursions for the whole quartet, where sonic panoramas of distant hills are soon enveloped into dense maelstroms of wet weather.

Hyperyak think big, and much of this dark music is impressive. Few moments of clarity other than from Ormiston's simple statements on fiddle, jaw's kept or uncrashly vocal. Casseley is in the "raring demes in caverns" school of electronics, and many listeners will be transported by his ambitious sweep. If I found my feet were still on the ground, it's probably because of a certain predictability about the music's structure. Sometimes a settled passage gets busy not because it needs to, but because someone seems bored with it. Desrozier's fiddle in particular suffers from impetuosity, wanting to refuse the group's slow-moving textures with an expressionism out of free Improv or New Complexity. More hyperactive than Hyperyak.

The slowpieces have an epic tone, referring to raising, seeking and "forging the way of heaven". If this makes me think of Canan The Barbarian, there's no denying that Hyperyak, at a time when much music seems to be becoming claims corpses, are unafraid to create shining, shaggy music with heavyweight ambitions.

SUSIE IBARRA & MARK DRESSER TONE TIME

WOBBLY WAIL WOMEN CD

BY JULIAN CONLEY

Susie Ibarra attracted attention playing drums with powerful saxophonist David Wiers, and she has regularly kept company with other free jazz heavyweights. The singular dimension of her drumming arises less from conventional modes of propulsion than from vibrant composition, brilliant contrasts of color and subtle shading, skillfully mediated relationships among densities and textures and expertise in spatial placement. Her inventive harmonisation of percussive sounds produces unusual kinds of morbidity and splendor, radiating energy rather than muscular drive. Wobly experienced bassist Mark Dresser, who studied with double bass virtuoso Benjamen Bartlett and gained impressing reinforcement from an extended spell with Anthony Braxton during the 1980s, is strongly equipped to interact with Ibarra's charged intimacy.

Bowing and plucking, Dresser draws some reticent threads through the readily

accommodating percussive fabric, or he finds all kinds of means to add weight and mass, further emphasizing the vengeful surface or intensifying its coloration. As often happens in such meetings of immensely sympathetic improvisers, the two musicians frequently appear to run off a single circuit and there are moments of anticipation and concordance that simply defy rational explanation. The names of the tracks, from "Pretoria" to "Elastic", suggest an overarching shape to this set of 15 discs, recorded last July. Certainly the programme is finely balanced and paced, but there's no hint of conceptual or theoretically based compromise to the music's spontaneous vitality or the musicians' out-of-the-moment resourcefulness.

ABNER JAY ONE MAN BAND

FULL TUNE, SOUNDSCAPE SUBCD CD

BY DAVID KEELMAN

Little is known about folk spirit and one-man band Abner Jay and what is less the distinct air of self-created myth. Like many popular entertainers, Jay obscured his real roots in order to access deeper, more "authentic" currents, rebirthing himself as a reinvented folk spirit of indeterminate age — he claims his house burnt down when he was a kid, destroying his little certificate — who travelled the breadth of America in an old camper van which he had converted into a stage, dispensing folk wisdom, cow-eth, blue jays and lustrous visions of dream spirit and sorrow. All this in a voice that could drop to a sub-Johnny Cash baritone as abruptly as a condemned man through a trapdoor.

What is verifiable is that as a young man in the 1930s he played with Sals Green's Minstrels, along the way amassing a vast knowledge of old-time rags and breakdowns. From 1946-56 he fronted The WMAZ Minstrels on Macon Radio but after that he dropped off the map until he resurfaced in the late 60s on a clutch of private pressings, mostly released via his own Brande Records label. In 1993, he attracted his longevity to the weekly study of "Improv" on his belly drumming water from that "Swanee River".

Jay's main instrument was the six string banjo, on which he had developed a unique rolling picking style. Held play live from the back of his camper when he wasn't in residence at Tom Ryan's Plantation Restaurant in Stone Mountain, Georgia, accompanying himself on bass drum and harmonica, occasionally switching to an electric slide guitar that he played in a stumpy, bawling style, running off locomotive chords with a spray of mud and dust. With original copies of his LPs now changing hands for serious collector's prices, *One Man Band*, a CD release of material from his Temple Comedy Blues and Swanee River & Cocaine Blues albums, represents his first ever widely available release. Although it's not the ideal place to start — for that you need his masterpiece *The Backbone Of America Is A Male And Cotton*, none of which is included here — it probably comes closest to capturing the spirit of his live performances. Jay described himself as "the last great Southern black minstrel show" and over this disc he pulls it all the stage, in strong every track with local news stories and lewd comedy jokes that can't help but detach from the emotional power of his songs. But Jay was a song and dance man, and



"There was a band playing in my head, and I felt like getting high..."

-Neil Young

A MESSAGE FROM THE GOOD FOLKS AT HYPERHEAD INDUSTRIES

DON'T BE A DIRTY HIPPIE

OUT NOW:

PELICAN "astuteless" CD
KEELHAWK "rubbed to..." CD
ANCHOVANCE ABIS "out" CD
SCISSORHIGHT "deathbush" MCD
THE DUKES OF NOTHING "war and wise" MCD

STILL HOT:

AUSTREITY PROGRAM "homo avia no" CD
PELICAN "unified" CD
CAVE IN "sawdust" 2XLP
BOTCH "fan anthology" CD
CDP/10

OUT SOON:

27 7"/CDP
AGORAPHOBIC REMIXES "pop" CD
SWEET'S C/P "boards with 10"
HIM VS. XXIIIHI COMP CD (FEATURING FINAL, OTHHELM, KID008, KHANATE, AUSTREITY PROGRAM, AND MUCH MORE)
PELICAN/GROWING 10"/CD
HAKKONEN/THE ARMS ARE SHAKES 10"/CD

HYPERHEAD INDUSTRIES

HYPERHEAD is: TORTUGA :: XXIIIHI
PO BOX 291430 LOS ANGELES, CA 90029 :: W: HYPERHEAD.COM
E: INFO@HYPERHEAD.COM
PURCHASE THESE AND OTHER FINE WAX PRODUCTS VIA
WWW.HYPERHEADSHOP.COM



monoral music 15

1 Callahan

Everyone Alive Wants Answers

Label: LSP \$8.99 / CD \$9.99

2 Maher Shalal Hash Baz

Geographic LP \$9.99 / CD \$10.99

3 Cat Power

You Are Free

Melrose CD \$9.99

4 Diamondhead

Redemptive Strikes

Geographic CD \$10.99

5 Marlene

The Sand And The Stars

Darius LP \$10.99 / CD \$10.99

6 Belle & Sebastian

Dear Catastrophe Waitress

Rough Trade CD \$9.99 / CD \$9.99

7 The Pajels

The Last Great Wilderness

Geographic LP \$8.99 / CD \$7.99

8 James Erik

You Can Make It If You Really

Melrose LP \$8.99 / CD \$10.99

9 James On Complex

Cherry Rivalry

Rock Action LP \$9.99 / CD \$9.99

10 Aladdin Roberts

Forever Snow

Rough Trade LP \$9.99 / CD \$10.99

11 Four Tet

Round

Domino LP \$10.99 / CD \$9.99

12 Joe Russell

Down In The Basement...Treasure

Trive Of Volume 78, 1926-1937

With 72-page color booklet

Not Her Record CD \$10.99

13 Outkast

Speakerboxxx / The Love Below

Atlantic 4X \$15.99 / CD \$11.99

14 Robert Wyatt

Changeling

Rykodisc CD \$10.99

15 Fennesz

Use In Japan

Tough Import CD \$14.99

2003 chart by staff, supporters, customers

Thanks to everyone who's helped us make

it through our first year!

Online ordering is now available. Points to

order are \$1 for 1st items, 50¢ thereafter

in person is great.

www.monoralmusic.com

Monoral Music, 12 Kings Court

6th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215

12-1pm every day. Tel: +64 141 588 926

these crowd-pleasing garbages were an intrinsic part of live stage show and persona. Besides, once he's in a flow, nothing else exists but that voice, a conduit for generations of mute souls. Of the disc's staggering performances, "I'm So Depressed" is a key Jay track, which he needed several times throughout his career. But the version here is definitive. Drive a dramatically descending chord pattern more commonly associated with rock-salt hysterics. Jay recounts tales of failed romances, plagues and love denied, returning again and again to the same barren chorus, "Looking back, over my life, Dr Love, I'm so depressed". Elsewhere there's grinding garage rock that out-punks each evildoer like The White Stripes, ghostly novelty tracks like "Wee Wee" and even proto-Velvet drug songs like "Cocaine Blues", which mixes Los Roid-style "outch guitar" with the blood-nail-dance dynamic of "Honey".

In the accompanying press release, Subliminal Sounds push *Drive-By* Bend as a kind of outsider/real people document but there's much more to *Never Jay* than that. He knits up a lot better analogies such as American primitive onsets as Arthur Doyle, Jonico's Ted Carmay, Sly Saxon and Charlie Fellers' Soapboxist. Anthony Brandon dubbed him an "American master". That'll do too.

KAYO DOT CHAIRS OF THE EYE

2004/01/22/09 CD

in David Stripes

It's tempting that so much of what purportedly lies its roots in the "Metal scene" nowadays is leaving behind the ancient trappings, the effete machismo, the hair, the tattoo parlor deal and the futuristic forms and manacles associated with the genre, bringing with it only... the Metal. Kayo Dot (formerly and perhaps unwisely known as Maudlin Di The Well), are a case in point.

Although they sagely cite Tony/I have correlations with Metal/Goth, there's something else altogether. They're floating out there with the likes of Gaspedard Nihil Black Emperor and Animal Collective, although socialist steel driving tone they Drive becomes his own niche in that particular corner of deep space.

Chairs Of The Eye takes the bipolar principle established by the likes of Nirvana to new extremes. These five tracks laudate aggressively, converse between sheer silence and primal, shrieking noise. "Like opening back "Warrior", whose pleading Metal is a pendulum swing away from layers of precatation like crushed rose petals. Kayo Dot are hardly the first to engage in this sort of musical push and pull but still, if ever, has it been carried off with such concentrated beauty in place of squallid pretense or self-indulgence, pomp or pretension.

"A Pitcher Of Summer" as heady as strobbery were before now, mooning quietly through glades before more sudden storms, long on intensity, short on stamina. These constant disruptions, however, prevent you from being lulled into ambient serenity and keep you alive to the lovely thunder of it all: "The Mindful Curiosity" and "Wayfarer" are similarly turbulent but again, the third is as irresistible as it is disquieting. One moment you're suspended in a world of prenatal haze, the next, burning into the world, it's a Caesarian Henry of Metal. One moment you're in some unearthly corner of Paradise with no idea how you arrived there, the next, the sky has turned

black and the rain is coming down in silver rods.

Track's executive producer John Zorn apparently urged Driver to think of this album in compositional terms. Driver, it seems, shrewdly resisted this pretension. More important than the structure here is its innate feel for tone poetry as affirmed on "The Antique", whose fragile and shorted piano passages and burgeoning, swelling glazes glazes with the tension of waiting for the storm to drop. Utterly exquisite, utterly alive, utterly apocalyptic, this is an album with which you may well feel hopelessly in love.

GUY KLUCVSEK & PHILLIP JOHNSTON TALES FROM THE CRYPTIC

WINTER & WINTER 01/0009 CD

BY BRIAN MCOWLEY

Guy Klucvsek took up the accordion while growing up in a Slovenian community in Western Pennsylvania and soon fed his own polka gusto. By the time he undertook advanced study of the instrument at university he had discovered the stimulating musical languages of Xenakis, Ligeti, Feldman and their contemporaries. Now, his own music filters the dance tunes, pop songs and vernacular forms he encountered as a child through a deeply composed of adventurous inclinations and musical sophistication. Whereas Pauline Diverge has used the accordion largely as a means to drop meditative engagement with the present moment, Klucvsek deconstructs enduring clichés between the instrument's varied history and its potential.

Philip Johnston, leader during the 1980s of the Minneapolis Sextet and then of Big Trouble, has a taste for distorting other forms around his soprano and alto saxophones, but his precise, rounded articulations have found their perfect complement in Klucvsek's versatile orchestrated reediness. *Tales From The Cryptic* presents compositions by both musicians, along with idiosyncratic adaptations of Satie and Schubert in that respect too they are remarkably well matched. "Blue Window", a deconstruction of Johann Sebastian that surfaced in 1991 as Klucvsek's *Winter Highlights Of The Apocalypse* (40) is agreeably realized here. The immediate appeal of the duo's music, its elegance and humor belied with melodic hooks, is saturated with outcast-bound nuance and know-how that reward careful and repeated listening.

Whether meeting with East European sociability or indulging in introspective wistfulness their playing is always lively to take an oblique turn, to step laterally into a more challenging field of musical options. Indeed those challenging elements are often smoothly and shrewdly dissolved through even the oddest passages.

LESSER SUPPRESSIVE ACTS I-X

MADONNA CUSHI CD

BY TOM RIDGE

It begins with a red helmet – the full Metal assault of "Act I", a breakneck thrash which slows to an earthy grind before increasing speed once more as it heads to the finish. If this marks a (slight) return to J. Doherty's San Diego punk rock, it's only a minor hitch. Surfing across a album's worth of metallic riffs, jumps and detours, "Act II" does, however, accurately set an incoherent tone for what follows, as Doherty's electronics fits coarsely between modes, tones

and textures, upsetting the same structures he painstakingly builds up and all the while making it look almost offhand, like self-inflicted acts of casual vandalism. Nothing here feels fixed, instead the music cracks and sparks with hyper-kinetic energy, kicking up plenty of surface grit along the way. The use of melody is sparse, restricted to small interludes brutally sandwiched between bursts of distorted noise and exploding beats. "Act IV" offers one more, fiery resolve with its typically linear flow, and "Act V" bubbles under like a kind of displaced lightning – but these are small comforts, meagre oases of genre-recognition when set against an overall impression of brutal inventiveness. At the same time there's a kind of contempt seeping from these jagged tracks, a "look you" challenge to any artist labelling of this music that usefully deflects any criticism of its more difficult aspects. Making this lightspeed, lesser's mutant electronics is an attempt to update punk's ideology by other means.

ALVIN LUCCIER STILL & MOVING LINES OF SILENCE IN FAMILIES OF HYPERBOLAS

LOVELY MUSIC LDD01015 3XCD

NOTHING IS REAL

WERHO SEARS CD

BY BRIAN MCOWLEY

Tone scientist Alvin Lucier belongs to the Pythagorean tradition of music. Each of his compositions takes a single, often very simple idea and pursues it rigorously. No concessions to taste and fashion are made. One feels that Lucier would compose exactly the same pieces even if no audience existed for them. He's aware, of course, that what he does can easily be misconstrued: "The results are subtle, often too much so for the average listener to discern. I accept this obstacle to the comprehension of my works but retain the intention as an impetus for compositional ideas".

The composition of *Still & Moving Lines Of Silence* began in 1972. It was, of course, the same as the piece in part two. This contains 12 pieces, each of which consists of a single note. One is a violin duet, the other 11 are for a range of solo instruments. All of the instruments are accompanied by a fixed tone produced by a synthesizer generator in a rubato, some of the instruments that can do so adjust their tuning microscopically, in stages, against that of the fixed tone, and varying degrees of aural disturbance are produced. The beatings are at their most erratic on "Voice" because of the singer's mobility. This is not a fiction, it's an interest in the nature of sound to look a steady note for the full duration of a breath, whereas a "Ganet" lay but more easily controlled shifts in pitch produce beatings that move at different speeds. Each instrument produces slightly different acoustic phenomena according to its physical characteristics. For example, pitch adjustments cannot be made to the instruments on "Mannin", "Alypionne" and "Glossolipsin", but the differences in speed of decay dictate how often a note is struck within a measure, and this in turn determines to what degree the beatings reach a steady state. A major problem with Lucier's music is unfettered resonance so that if you don't listen carefully the rewards appear meagre. This is



especially true of *Still & Moving Lines Of Silence*, in which a one composition on the relatively rare diverse collection, *Nothing Is Real* ("Silver Streetcar For The Orchestra"), featuring solo amplified triangle (a Pythagorean instrument par excellence, if ever there was one!), is the piece in question. The relentless chink-chink-chink of the triangle may appear to offer little by way of relief. But careful listening reveals a myriad of subtly changing, elastic texture, attack and volume vary, and the triangle is struck, clamped or opened at various points on its surface. Of the other compositions, the performer on "Dancers With Objects" employs two pencils, one of which is struck against the other while the latter is held against resonating surfaces (a cardboard box, plastic cup, marmalade jar, etc.). On "The Sacred Fall", permutations of the letters K, N and O are declared into various empty vessels.

Unfortunately for Lucier, free improvisation and sound pools have done little to ease things for several decades and making either a better job of it, Mattias Kall, whose voice, piano and percussion are the only instruments to be heard on these tapes, is not entirely to blame. When he's given stronger material to work with, such as "Distant Drums" and "Nothing Is Real", the results are far more engaging. "Nothing Is Real" draws on the Beatles' song "Stewberry Fields Forever", and, as I think, a comment on Britfests. Isolated fragments of the melody are played on a piano with the sustain pedal held down, recorded by a microphone and played back through a tiny loudspeaker attached to the bottom of a porcelain teapot. The teapot's lid, when closed, serves as a very effective filter.

PHIL MINTON & ROGER TURNER DRAINAGE

EMANEM 4211 2002

BY MARTIN LONCEY

Vocalist Phil Minton's long association with Mike Westbrook best represents his maxime jazz work, but the trompeter and singer has also been blessed with accompanying percussionists Roger Turner for more than two decades. In this setting, Minton usually settles to vocalizing. The duo's album rate has been roughly one per decade, but at least this third bout is a double set. The first was recorded over two sessions (2002/03) at London's Gateway Studios, and benefits from an intimately rounded sound, all the better for entering deeply into the fine detail of this duo's sensitive and responsive improvising.

Minton's often ludicrous gibbling can be therapeutic (particularly for him), but he does betray a tendency to slip too readily into his funkier, Donk Duck vocalization technique. Turner's vocabulary is much wider, often prompting the listener to hime in on his perpetually changing timbre, volume, speed and texture. With his percussion so close-miked, he frequently limits himself to one or two items, exhausting a surprising number of possibilities in a comparatively short time. These studio pieces are kept deliberately short, varying their nature considerably on "Reasonable". Turner scowls bowl edges, while Minton sets up sinuous lusciousness in his mouth. Study "Temperature" has the quality of a traumatic briefcase, with Turner using the creaky-crashing potential of his tall kit. Minton is mostly a dove, his old-man stammer breaking out into a faulty gurgle. Turner uses

plapping water percussion on "No Way". Minton enacts his own radio playlet on "Most Likely". Turner's bass bones are extremely low on "Quot" and Minton is at his most bayed during "Actual Fact". As this disc closes, Turner is deeply into motorcycle maintenance and Minton is operating at the extremes of his multiple voicing capacity. The two live sets on the second disc appear less focused, as the studio material, with more a more direct, open-room acoustics. "Self" is a complete 33 minute performance from 2002's Freedom Of The City festival in London. Its tension between sparse events develops a sense of suspended anticipation. Soon, Turner is screaming, Minton matching him with strangled almost. They're sudden deranged howls draw a crashing response from Roger. The remaining six tracks make up most of the pair's 1998 appearance at Instant's Chavels, near Paris. "Adequate" boasts tightly compressed music, dry dashes of acidity, towards the end, Minton lights up as he breaks into song, paying unexpected tribute to Sinatra on "Frankly".

NEUROSIS & JARBOE NEUROSIS & JARBOE NEUROT NEGRO CD

BY MIC CLARKE

Since the dissolution of Swans in 1988, composer, pianist, producer and pioneer internet artist The Living Bywords has been collaborating with San Francisco's foremost proponents of specific guitar. Neurosis, Neurosis & Jarboe adds to Jarboe's discography of more than 30 collaborative projects, and precedes next month's release, *Men*, which will feature an eclectic array of 'guests' with male artists such as Jim Thirlwell, Alan Sparhawk and David J. Judging by Jarboe's latest performance, these guys should feel like they are lining up for the firing squad, ready to be beaten into submission. With Neurosis she's at her most visceral, triumphant and vicious.

When two spheres overlap, the resulting ellipse emphasises the most striking and powerful characteristics of each body. On *Neurosis & Jarboe*, it feels as though all musicians involved are unleashing the fiery inner core of their creativity. The opening "Within" begins with an apocalyptic drambest and a siren of ringing keyboards. Jarboe spits a thrilling, terrifying sentence over and over: "I tell you, if God wants to take me, He will — HE'S COMING", before exploding into a long spell of percussive heavy patter. Except, sounding like she's expelling inner demons, Jarboe's patter is calling her more anthropomorphic to the surreal breathless heard on so many other contemporary records.

There is something wonderfully unnerve about Jarboe, always an intense and provocative performer, who commands the complete attention of her audience. Her powerful live presence survives the transfer to record, *Neurosis & Jarboe* swallows you whole and spits you right back out. This album contains some of the most exciting, howling sounds yet from either artist, and their collaboration adds up to something very special indeed.

NOBODY GHOSTLIGHT GHOSTLIGHT LP/CD

BY TOM RIGGIE

Here *HipHop* auteur and producer Elvin Estrella, aka Nobody, explores West Coast psychedelic

pop by reinterpreting it in a contemporary light. Many instruments, his music evokes a specific time and place through its deployment of sedate beats, aquatic sounds and mellowed out commentary on West Coast. Deft is more a commentary on West Coast pop than a facsimile of it. Estrella's skill lies in bringing out a particular feel without explicitly resorting to nostalgia. He reimagines classics, playing straight and stropped of period effect, with his own compositions. Thus the bleached out sense of yearning in Beachwood Sparks' Chris Gurr performance of "The Monkees' "Purpose Song" knows it sounding slightly dreamy but without any wistful affliction. The wide range of samples incorporated in Estrella's landmark arrangements carry just enough of an undercurrent of melancholia to give it more substance than a mere drill-out exercise.

It's difficult to pick out highlights, as fluid is the overall impression of the music. Paradoxically its very contemporary essence Nobody's weakness. Estrella's over-reliance on mid-paced grooves leaves the music gliding by too smoothly to make much of an impression. But the best of Pacific Deft successfully absorb disparate West Coast elements — baroque chamber pop, mild psychedelic displacement — into its creator's schematic, resulting in a disc that can't be easily categorised.

ENLAR ÖRN GHOSTLIGHT GHOSTLIGHT LP/CD

BY NICK SOUTHGATE

From the moulder on the cover to the anarchy in the grooves, this is unmistakably an Icelandic album. Iceland has always delivered epic art to the world, from the Sagas on down to the Superheroes, of which Enlar Örn was a founding member. It should be no surprise for a country made up from lava flows and glaciers. Even modern living in Reykjavik is poised to these timeless primal forces: the city's energy is fed by volcanic heat-exchange generators. The cultures of the future live on the edges of the world. Inquiries have long long traditions of prophetic, esoteric poet artists. Hard truths and deep wisdoms will be allowed to souls who survive such odyssey and pure habitats. Enlar Örn belongs in this ancient tradition of outsider poets and wise folk. These recordings are, therefore, truly World Music, if the term is understood as a living tradition and not a marketing tool.

Superficially Örn's album sounds like a mix of electronics and HipHop, but this description would shortchange the instabilities and effects strewn for his listeners. One form of a pronunciation, a few simple tools used to create the sound. And Enlar's 11 year old son, Kakkus, serves his initiation by providing a youthfully unpretentious trumpet part to the opening track "Sicride".

Enlar Örn cannot be said to sing at any point, but his part whispered, part spoken delivery, weaving between instant about and mutant holes, would be betrayed if it was conveniently straggled as rapping. His delivery serves his lyrics: often only a few words, repeated with varying emphasis, as he tries to bring the meaning from one line, one "Calm Water", Ray and HipHop beneath their meaning and achieve resonance through dry and sincere reference. Ghostlight, however, attempts to be unrelentant

innov 801



R. STEVIE MOORE
NEVERTHELESS OPTIMISTIC

The godfather of DIY home-recording returns with his finest release ever

innov 896



MESOZOIC
KEN FIELD

21st Century New Orleans brass band link from Birdsong of the Mesozoic's Ken Field

innov 887



ANDREW VIOLETTE
PIANO SONATAS

Majestic 3-disc pianistic epic from one of Manhattan's hottest composers

NEW RELEASES FROM

NOVA

the label of the American Composers Forum

WWW.INNOVA.MU

Size Matters

3", 7", 10" and other misshapen formats



Gossamer dispatches: Laila Elggren and CM Von Hausen

Unlabeled (Dee Stadt D664 7") is a three way release by **John Duncan**, **CM Von Hausen** and **Laila Elggren** made available in a hand-numbered edition of 500 to mark the trio's performance in Bremen in September 2003. While Duncan's "The Gossamer Dispatch" is a fairly diverting composition based around spontaneous shorthand manifestations, Hausen's "The Way The Bones Lay" is a plummy, comedic and entirely unconvincing reading from a backeared piece of cartoon body humor. Best of the bunch is Laila Elggren's "The Cabbatores Is The Weapon Of The Proletariat No 10", which features flexible metal waveforms as subtle as any contemporary Whitesnake conception. (DK)

Orgasmus in der Schwelzreise Schwarz (Dee Stadt D673 7") is a staggering blast of negative joy centered around the death rattle of an old piano. A single hypothermic chad falls again and again, while the instruments' inwards sound like they're called it sand, with every punctuating chord sending showers of grains into the air. Somewhere in the background a saxophonist, perhaps a subway busker out in the street, attempts to play on in the face of the absolute refusal. It's a beautiful standstill. (DK)

The Japanese label Hello Good-Bye's ongoing series documenting underground legend and ex-Cellibids Denzetsu bassist **Hiroshi Nara** is more formally tucked against minimalist marches obviously formed with those two beasts, Gachem (Hello Good-Bye Studio UNC-0008 3" CD) and All I Need (Hello Good-Bye Studio UNC-0009 3" CD). Gachem is particularly disturbed. Recorded in 1974 while he was still a member of Toshiki (Shizuka's Zuno Kessatsu, it's one of Nara's potential attention-deficit misadventures, taking off from the box of chairwheels and teddies before moving through speedies that highlight the sound of flesh on flesh, amphetamine piano runs, compositions for hollow pottery and the destruction of new Lego buildings. All I Need is a compilation, with tracks drawn from across Nara's career. The title track is a great folk punk from the early 90s, shadowed by the same kind of deeply malcontent atmosphere that cloaked much of Sky Sauer's work with Yo Yo White 13. The second track was mysteriously recorded in 2000 and sounds alarmingly like the sort of Time Bandits re-interpreting Jimi Hendrix's "Fire", while track three (no English titles) dates from

1977, while he was still active with Refines, and features Nara working crone-drumming mood hurricanes from an acoustic guitar like it was some kind of Venetian barge. Neat. (DK)

Presumably named after the MC's five rock epic, **Black To Comm** is a computer music artist from Hamburg. On their debut release, **Black To Comm** (Dekeider 006 10"), the sounds consist of cascading short bursts of electronic glibberish, woven into sheets of shimmer that bill through space glimmering, then wiggle on the floor with all the grace and beauty of twitching *Murphy* cats. It appears there are some guitar samples jammed into the mix at points, but it's a bit less like The MC5 than some might hope. Still, if you can imagine a version of that group evolving inside digital traditions, maybe there's a synaptic connection after all. (BC)

It's been a while since we beheld new vinyl by **The Haffer Trio**, so the arrival of *The Birds Must Be Eliminated* (Dekeider 004 10") is especially pleasant. The two pieces here are lovely sedate excursions along the edge of the drone universe, recorded in Iceland, and connecting pathways between organic/acoustic cloud generators and tunnels of pure static electricity. Andrew Macfadden has proven himself to be a master of space and time over the years, and almost every new piece of The Haffer Trio puzzle has been an absolutely radiant hatching of the audio universe. This is no exception. (BC)

Best archival release of the year, must be the one documented here by Finnish drummer **Toei Laakso** from back when he was in ninth grade. *Toei Laakso (aka Laila Laib 7")* was recorded in the basement, with a variety of cheap equipment, and a technical approach that is perhaps a bit more primitive than most. But the results — largely the work of meticulously hand-drawn and undetectable electronic jaw-gaws, has as much humorous savor as most of the American Tapes stuff I love so much. One gets very little sense, however, what Mr. Laakso thought of this stuff at the time. It'd be interesting as hell to have had some notes with him discussing his feelings about it both now and then. This is the kind of contextualizing (as was done on that *Thunderbolts!* CD by Tony Conrad's infant son on *Table Of The Elements*) that really makes the whole thing translatable. As a sonic, this is just mysterious. Which is cool too, of course. It's just — inquiring minds NEED to know. (BC)

Mr California & The State Police do not waste space. Audio Hallucinations (Load LOAD0052 10") has 51 songs, filling California's non-patented combination of drum box, mesh guitar and treated vocals (like many minimalist songsters, most of the tunes here are not expensive literally, but they have a tendency to create a fairly impressive pile of aggressive power hunch. And yeah, I guess it is something of a joke, but what the hell? It's hard to think of a better one man band operating within 100 miles of me today. Or even yesterday! (BC)

Morse Code vs **Cent** (RIP 03 3" CD) is not so much a split release as a kind of semi-battle between **Morse Code** (aka Tim Morse) and **Cent** (aka Jessica Rylen). Morse used to be the drummer for Massachusetts' legendary *Anti Cent* (one of the few American groups who actually informed certain quarters of the Japanese noise underground). Rylen is an interesting solo tactician, also from the Bay State, whose recent live shows have been making noise fans spin in tight orbits. On this release, the two combine to create something that's hard to describe, but very nice. There are female vocal passages (which make it right, flaring cowards, there are bursts of sonic mugs that feel like less pouring out of elevator doors, there are ghosts of saxophone improvisation being blown far under the earth's surface. And it all comes together like a big lamp of something hot and bothered. Just like you! (BC)

Because Jari Bertola was a designer as well as a sound sculptor, it is a genius-like move to make a series of sound recordings using one of the drums he designed as the sole instrument. Enter California's **Steve Radek** with his (char is a subgenre of resistance) *Transposed New Plastic Music NPBIS 3" CD*. Although I don't think the piece is new, it just got passed along, and the individual tracks are great — seven non-aggressive manipulations of air and electronics and textures, and even in ways that make as thick of a future that is survivable. Radek's work is always interesting and minimal, but this time around there are layers of meaning (and perhaps even humor) at work here that are not always present in his documents. (BC)

Get a good life split release from **Miles Shiftlet** and **Burning Star Core**, too. 21.03 (Garnaby GB51 3" CD). Shiftlet usually uses desaturated guitar tactics, but here he does ticks

with a laptop and shovels and some other damn thing. The results are two pieces of extended insect gut. The first, "Light On", moves under your skin like a long needle covered with sandpaper. The second, "Sorry I Suggested That", is more like a little army of cricket dentists exploring the dents of your mouth with metal earth-moving equipment. Burning Star Core's recordings often feature C Spencer Webb's mousing violin figures, but here those stings are also visible for purer electronics. If you can call something that sounds this thoroughly dirty "pure", that is "Spread Your Dying Flower One Last Time" sounds like a transformer robot being led by a blowtorch inside a wind tunnel. "She Can And Hye-She" is more akin to contact making my stomach while I drive my car across a bumpy field of wheat. What I don't like is all about it. (BC)

The thought of a live album of Garneby recordings is not the kind of thing that usually sets pinks ablaze at my house, but Public Eye (Dekeider 005 10") by **Matt Ward** sounds nothing like you'd expect. Using lots of effects pedals, the squawk-squawk quality of so much Garneby stuff is minimized, and what results is electronic music. Don't get me wrong, there are plenty of bleaps here, but the sh, chaves is outweighed by how, if you know what I mean. And one supposes, given that Ward used to be half of the ingenious Shok, Hansen & Walkman, this really shouldn't be a surprise. (BC)

Zanakis comes from the depths of underground Atlanta with an impeccable pedigree, being connected to the combo Charlie Parker and to the Old God Collective. What could be more? Not Nara. And their debut record, *Z vs V (2nd Gold No Number 7")* is pretty much about. Using electric bass and an assortment of woodwinds, horns, drums and chad electronics, the two do a beautiful job of going beyond the formality that seems to lie in the hearts of so many Americans. The song titles here (all 13 of them) are a choice. A few include "Dick Cheney Blasted To Death On The Street Of Detroit", "Key Blar Eaten By French Poodles", "William Kintal Raped In Prison", and "George W Bush Go Stript To Fucking Hell". These are the kind of sentiments and the kind of sounds that any true lover of freedom is going to like. So go out and get it straight and check this one out. (BC) □ *Reviewed by Byron Coley and David Krenan*

The Compiler

Various artists: reviewed, rated, reviled

Hooding out: LSD March

Before vanishing into the wilderness, PSF's Tokyo Flashback series once diligently panned the sediment of the Japanese underground to dredge up the best of its psychedelic nuggets. In its absence the legendary Osaka noise label Alchemy has muscled in on the damn with its fine **The Night Gallery** (Alchemy ARCD147 CD), the first volume of which captures five young groups on the lysergic cusp of getting it on. *Minimotoko* and *U-Tight* provide solid, sweetly sloped garage angst, with the latter particularly working up a nasty, though devoid of strain. *LSD March* come out all decidedly walled, two of their three tracks bowing on the verge of nodding out. Their passage to oblivion is eased by a particularly elegant and elegant waltz solo from Rinji Fukusaka. The most captivating tracks are by two girl duos—Tokyo's Doodles and Okayama's Chozo. Using just vocals and bass, Chozo map slow and beautifully resonating dream spaces that are almost desolate in their clarity. Doodles play like some dangerous punks, propelling Akira Terashima's spin-out verses and guitar work and Neo Shibori's rudimentary drumming into some engagingly looped, buzzed-out anarchy. For their angular ability to summon rock transcendence through the most unromantic of channels, Doodles warrant looping an eye on. (AC)

One of two contributions on **Sound Stage 1** (Disceworld CTR4265 CD), a compilation of post-digital songs and instrumentals, are more tame than the Twelves (shock Gutwurz's "Rain"). When you are so far away, over den walled, yet the premise is interesting. How do new digital style techniques dovetail with the old age to make pop songs and catchy instrumentals? Roaming the outer limits of territory currently being explored by Björk, David Sylvian, a.k.a. Tokyo Noxio and Plurimem is a crop of musicians barely dissatisfied with both the unspoken constraints of "serious" electronics and the overestimated rules of commercial pop. As usual with Disceworld, the loosed tracks are carefully chosen: Four Ills, Boogemans, Safety Scissors and Comelius complement the theme without veering too far. Strangely enough, or not, the veterans seem to be pushing the envelope further than anybody. Harumi Hironaka's "Star Walk" is a cute exercise in soft-flow keyboards that integrates literally detailed robot toys into a compelling tune (or boudoir, at least). "Quarter Dream" by Human Audio Sphere is similarly prosaic and intricate. This is a rivaled *Yellow Magic Orchestra*, with Hosono, Ryuichi Sakamoto and Yuhiko Takahashi tracing under a suitably 21st century haze. A few spooky title cuts, constructed with swirling arpeggios. As with *Yellow Magic's* "Cooking, Ring" threat to be a *Yellow Magic* album but proves too claiming to resist. Kawaii! The CD also contains two modest yet excellent

moves with music, one by Takagi Masakata, who recently toured with David Sylvian, the other by Ryuchi Kurokawa. (DI)

The Hideset has been a working class bar in Chicago since 1834, and under its current management of Tim and Katie Tuten and twin brothers Mike and Jim Henschel, it has mutated into a showcase for performers on their way up (or to somewhere, anyway). The Tuten duo don't make much noise about it, but they're both trained social workers, so it's no surprise that the Hideset maintains close community ties, doing events and benefits on a regular basis. Nor should **Hideset Workers' Camp** (Jumbalotti 69702 CD) come as a shock: 22 tracks by a cross section of diverse talent untied by one thing: someone involved works at the Hideset. Like the club's bookkeeping, the compilation leans towards the rocker and folkier end of Chicago's musical spectrum and away from the jazz/Impov scene which finds its home at other clubs, but besides punk (The Deepes, The Dashed), there's Clyde Fiedler's sunny Motown, cemented folk from Kim, alt Country from Laurie and John Sibbott and Katie Kessie, the over the top Roquians of Malachuk, and a Spanish song by Manuel de Falla (and a Hideset employee, don't write it) performed by Juliana Armbrust and Clinton Valencia. Such unclassifiables as Malynque, the Shibboleth Orchestra (they wear klemmer), and Burger Dreams should be right up your alley (EY)

Evans/Kelly Capra/Lendowski/Hogash (Wallace 24 CD) presents four post-rock groups from Italy in music that's anything but rock. Evans plays a moody piano stripped from a car driver's seat, a son setting over a rain-soaked motorway, with intonations of tenderness, longing and perhaps danger. They play chiming, deadpan instrumentals which have the sweet, static quality of post-rock guitarism. When they sing, they follow the gentle chime of the rhythm. Their chosen, choppy rhythms evoke Joy Division and Leonard Cohen, but without trying too hard to push the sounds around. Everything is suffused in the sounds made by turned-up amplifiers, but kept soft and soothing. Beauty is achieved by acceptance of limited music: an aesthetic of calm. Yellow Capra are more ambitious, with parts for oboe and flute and wordless female vocals accompanying the guitars and drums. Guitar riff repeat with a John Fahey-like sense of stoned catatonia. They play superlaid and sound like other groups who used nursery harmonies at top volume (Eleveners, Banishes). After a while you want to rattle the guitarist and ask: "Are twanging repetitive lullabies really so hip?"

Lendowski may be named after a sleeping town, but they play to wake you up. They begin with gently drummed guitar and soft drums, but the disilluminating symbols signal that drummer Cristiano Luciani isn't going to play post-rock

orders. Gutierrez Marco Mastra gradually works the harmonies, a sudden "Tatlat" being warning you of an onramp. Impassioned. It's obvious the duo can really play their lullaby-like opening could be there to catch the soon listener into their camp, fascinating to watch them move from asinine to erect. After the diastrophic emanation of Eterna and Yellow Capra, it's like leaving a dimly-lit Alpine tunnel for a star-ganglione night sky. "Etrone" (Hogash) references Samuel Beckett in its 90s, and Jim Henschel in its opening. When they climax, Lendowski recall the stunted violence of Stefan Zweig's *Acropolis*. Players who can take free improvisation's stop-start rhythm into rock bombast are few and far between.

After this bit of cosmic plasmatic sensuality, Hogash return you to the post-rock tunnel with lulling guitar strums and a hoarse "lucked-up" vocal sounding like an ungrilled Kurt Cobain. They well arranged tunes employ hanging melodic curves, but have the back sound of a successful formula. Lendowski expose the corners of post-rock as a packaged commodity for those scared of musical and intellectual freedom. The contact provided them here by Wallace Records is perfect for their subversive masterpiece—LENN/ACORRA/benjamin (BW) If you are not an avid reader of music technology magazines, you are possibly unaware of Sample Days, where copyright-free scraps of sound eagerly offer themselves up for inclusion in your next piece of music. You probably aren't used to paying \$91 for a single audio CD either—the selling price for *Hogash's* Northern Japan based. Division for one is **Glennery Japan** (Discovery DFC03090 CD). Given falling computer disc sales and the imminent collapse of most record labels, the only sectors of the corporate to remain in rude health will soon be cassettes and TV music. So, your compass have hinted the deal for that far Eastern corporate video score, and you'd like to bring some old school integrity to your sound by adding, say, an oriental flute. What to do? Well, you could call in a *Shakespeare* player, but then you'd have to deal with your obvious personality and limited technique. Far better to dip into *Discovery Japan*, where 90 tracks of Japanese traditional music await.

Instrumentals are recorded dry so you can add effects yourself; musicians are anonymous, and some playing is a little perfunctory. Shamisen, Taegum shamisen and shakuhachi play complete phrases and single notes. All this is in folk idiom (there's no dussal shakuhachi) and in toki and Buddhist chant are also included. The best sections are devoted to the high, stinging style of Nanyang singing, and the lively "Kino-te", where instrumentalists like "Kobako-ko" are sketched in, chosen during a folk song. If you don't know what "Kino-te" is, you can look it up in the notes. "Kino-te" in a folk song is taken to a single, and is

indispensable. There is no definition of a chorus in folk songs exists? This wonderful gibbous runs throughout *Discovery's* notes and Website—possibly the result of hysterically subjecting all text to translation software.

Discovery Japan is an old-style sampling CD. All tracks are audio only. **Shamisen** (Discovery DFC0580 CD-ROM) and **Allegretto** (Discovery DFC0590 CD-ROM) were more up to date, offering scores of computer files on CD-ROM, which can't be played in a normal hi-fi. Shamisen has good playing throughout, but I'm almost positive the whole thing was done on Taegum shamisen, a distinct northern folk style played on a larger instrument. Calling it Shamisen is either too calling a voice da gamba about Oslo.

The Legend Of China (Discovery DFC0530 CD-ROM) is the best of the bunch. It includes a CD-ROM with nearly 400 files, plus an audio CD that you can set to random play for an audio experience. There are 30 small sized and sized tracks as simply fine (Walt) recordings of quality music. In addition to vast numbers of percussion, strings and wind instruments, there are vocal tunes da face from Peking Opera actors, and even 15 unlisted examples of street corner ambience. (CB)

The Nonesuch Explorer session programme proceeds apocryphal, among them a pair of attractive albums covering Mexico. "Hells Walking Room" as the redskins given to the interior world province of Michoacan in south west Mexico. Herencia Yachuma has been reporting there from 1942 onwards, a 1996 set was released as **The Real Mexico in Music And Song** (Nonesuch Explorer 755979724 CD). The most vigorous tracks are Apatzingtan Ensemble's satirical declamations, sung over harp and vihuela. Contrast comes from the sensitive harp solos of Teodoro Nariño, and "Riel De Canales", a popular song heartwarming plucked on guitar by Joaquín Buitrago. The Piveto Sones also tug at the heartstrings with sweet, close harmony vocals, both a cappella and with an orchestra of mandolins. Even further south are the processes of Chaparral and Orizaba, where European, Indian and African musics collide with home results. **Exploring Of Chaparral And Orizaba** (Nonesuch Explorer 755979732 CD) is an atmospheric and eccentric classic, originally from 1976, beautifully recorded by David Lewontin. Bawlers, crowd bells, flute and drums set the scene as religious officials, priests and musicians process around a small highland town. A mambo combo plunks out a tune redolent of 1930s Europe, while brass bands fill the town square to celebrate Christmas, an excuse for less worn fireworks. Gloriously dazed singing, from the drowsy calmness of some ceremony or other, features on several of the finest tunes, preps, harps and the rest sound so high as kites (CB). Reviewed by Clive Bell, Alan Cummings, David Toop, Ed Ward and Ben Watton



seeking resolve, while the bright opening drone of "Luvucakes" evolves into a shimmering lattice of brittle energy and the delicate harmonies of "Oaken" glaze like gold dust waiting to be panned out of a desert ocean. Most of all, though, the music has an extraordinary saturated living colour, as the title track (and its title) "Velocity Of Hue" so succinctly suggest.

THE SONS OF TC LEHRIDGE A GIANT: THE DEFINITIVE TC LEHRIDGE

ACORN RECORDING COMPANY ARC001 2XCD
BY KEN HOLLOWS

It is a veritable fact that as Timewave Zero, a mathematical correlation of historical events to the structure of the universe, draws ever closer to its omega point, scheduled to take place on 21 December 2012, there will be an increasing evidence of resonance being played by Colin Wilson, having first manifested himself as the start of The Orb's "D06E" talking about Theodor De Chardin's concept of the *Universum* in 1992, the man with the most resonating voice in existence has made numerous appearances on both CD and DVD, but none so protracted or enjoyable as his contribution to this ambitious tribute to the work of archaeological aesthete TC Lehridge.

Anyone approaching Lehridge's fascinating researches into time and location for the first time would consequently be well advised to pass over Keith Webster's introductory essay and the study space rock offered on "Phase One" of *A Giant* and head straight for the second disc. Here they will find Wilson's appreciative overview of Lehridge's life and ideas, presenting a picture of an academically trained archaeologist whose empathy with the classical dogmas of historical research led him in later years to explore such complex and widespread phenomena as crowing, ghosts, magic, precognition and the nature of time. "No one who is interested in the paranormal can afford to ignore TC Lehridge," declares Wilson. The fact that this discourse is accompanied by a shimmering Ambient interplay of field recordings, rattling keyboards and gently chiming guitars only adds to its thoughtful charm, as does the concluding moment, when Joy Wilson reads a letter from Lehridge's widow against a piano's subdued tones. This makes for a fine and proper introduction to some of more arresting listening to be found on the first disc.

One or two the occasional auxiliary, The Sons, etc are essentially Doug Fieger, Rival Beas and Webster Tish, who communicate best through a loose trinity of drums, bass and guitar, particularly on the powerful howlingly incantatory "The Black" and "IC Who?"; in his capacity as executive producer and spiritual guru eminence, Julian Cope not only contributes some enthralling skronketones and session work but also jointly delivers his own composition "TC-LEHRIDGE" at the close of Phase One. Perhaps the quietest participant in all these festivities, however, is Lehridge himself, and not simply because he has been dead these past 30 years (he is, nevertheless, present, discussed and personified with admirable ease by The Sons, but he is never directly quoted). The covers to his books are reproduced as part of the packaging, but not a word is lifted from them

Consequently a strange silence lingers at the heart of this project, until one remembers that in mystical terms the sons will always rise up against the father and shall do so until the end of time.

As for Colin Wilson, enjoy him while you can. According to the mathematics of Timewave Zero, you only have nine years left before the universe dematerialises forever. Uh, better make that eight.

THE SPACE BETWEEN WITH JOËLLE LEANDRE

483 MUSIC 4451097 CD
WITH MATTHEW SPERRY
483 MUSIC 4451095 CD
BY MARYN LOUGHE

The Space Between is a particularly apt name for the trio of Pauline Olives (accordion), Philip Gök (shakuhachi) and Dana Reason (guitar). Olives brings her Deep Listening practices into their sounds like a completely improvised sphere, with all three players attuned to each other's most sensitive gestures. Everyone emits each note to link to hold out. Stripped of any echo or delay treatments, Olives concentrates on the acoustic purity of her Just Intoned instrument. Those twinned discs each feature a great bassist. The session with Joëlle Leandre recorded live in Berkeley, California in 2002. Naturally high in the balance, her harsh jabs immediately impress themselves on the opening "Angelus", prompting Gök to match her violence with his own percussive trills. Leandre's lively phrasing evokes some strong dynamic curves, but "Sensory" settles down into layers of extended note vibrating against each other, ultimately diverging into ornamental figures. The interplay is particularly sensitive on "Omizans", which explodes into "Mans", the sweetest point of the set. Again it's Leandre leading this corralled violence, and her dandelion chatter on the closing "David" complete this troubled foray into extremes of loud and quiet.

The Matthew Sperry disc is in memory of the bassist who died in a road accident. Featuring on "The Decisive" three tracks, his playing offers a complete contrast to Leandre's attack. Recorded in 1999, again in Berkeley, the tape ran out before the end of the performance. The curtailed 36 minute piece charts a very gradual increase in fugibility, with Sperry contributing spry details and sudden stabs, alternated with soft bowing or gentle persussing. The quietest track expectations aroused by their instruments. At one point, they simply stave or softly rattle in a snare. Dedicated to Sperry's wife, the other piece "Stace" was performed by the trio in 2002, at Toy Arts Center New York. Its carefully marked rhythms of King Crimson and Yes, seems to make their 1960s granddaddy rock screaming from the seams.

STEREO LAB MARGARITE ECLIPSE DUPONTIC DUPT003 CD

BY MAE CLARKE

Margaret Eclipse was written and recorded by Loretta Sadler and Tim Gane after this year, in the new studio they set up in a remote region of Bordeaux to allow themselves to create at their leisure in a new place. It's their first album (although we first met them in 1980 in the *Garageband* series) since the death of founding guitarist/vocalist Mary Hansen in London in 2002. Here the group make subtle shifts in

sound and equilibrium necessitated by her absence.

That said, *Margaret Eclipse* continues along lines that Stereolab have been laying down since the late 1990s: motorik drumming and a swath of keyboards traversing a linear landscape, with the emphasis on Sadler's iconic, dewy vocals. "Red And Triple" is carried on the kinetic motion of Andy Remick's drumming. "The Mar With 100 Cells" takes its lead from Gane's soft, repetitive guitar chords and Sadler's whimsical overblown guitars, gently spooned in and out of the mix. Brushes with minimalist Techno and lapses into funk are all familiar territory for the group by now, but their popper elements still lurk beneath the surface. *Uplifting* melodies peak through drizzly electronics on "Bop Scotch", where a rush of clipped beats suddenly and marvelously shatters its laudable simplicity. The album's closing track, "Dear Marge", plays a similar trick just as fluidly, the tone blossoming into exhilarating experimentation along the way, before a burst of brittle minimalist funk does the album to its best idiosyncratic close.

THINKING PLAGUE A HISTORY OF MADNESS CUNEIFORM RUNE 146 CD

BY KEITH MOUNTE

It has been 20 years since Rock In Opposition ceased to exist as a movement in any official sense, and the work of the original participants is now either far removed from what might be usefully remembered (in the case of the Henry Cow ones), or it has lost any sense of the politics of 'oppositional' which formed an integral part of the musicians' practice (witness the other bloodless recent work of Art Zoyd, for example). Once RIO had become a mere musical style; storm of the sociological aspect, it lost its raison d'être and motivating spirit. Nowadays it's just a Prog rock footnote, a means of categorising any group interested in tricky metres, dissonant contrapuntal complexity and extended composition. Nevertheless, at its best this music can be stimulating and vital. It's only RIO, but I like it.

Carrying the torch for these avant Progressive refusniks are Thinking Plague, part of a late-state Cow-inspired contingent including Sulu's and Peter Internet Guild. These groups have been periodically active since the mid-60s and often produced some extraordinary work, often featuring input from Chris Oudier collaborators like Bob Drake and Thomas Dimuzio. Their music evokes the salon woodwinds and cellos of the European groups for a more traditional eclecticism, and their driving, whirlwind discos show a less restrained side of King Crimson and Yes, aiming to make their 1960s granddaddy rock screaming from the seams.

On "Blown Apart" and "Lux Lacer", this new album finds the group's main writer Mike Johnson in apocalyptic mood, layering the pale vocals of Deborah Papp into a haze of chaos and doom, her exquisitely twisted harmonies spinning tales of war, despair and redemption as the music becomes audaciously, perhaps absurdly, complex. Unfortunately these Prog thrills are fewer and further between than on their masterpiece *Win The Time*. This is a more solid use of studio technology Johnson is searching for new ways for the music to evolve, but too much of the album gets bogged down in overblown trickery

and stodgy, anedotal atmospherics. Stripping away some of the digital sheen would improve matters no end; so might greater freedom for his instrumentalists. Some of the album's best moments happen when the track closes, leaving space for air or accordion; and Ron Miles provides fascinating distorted trumpet on "Consolationism". Thinking Plague are exciting and ridiculous in equal measure, as good Prog rock should be.

'BLUE' GENE TYRANNY TAKE YOUR TIME LONELY MUSIC LON01005 CD

BY PHILIP CLARKE

'Blue' Gene Tyranny is the cleanest piano invented by pianist/composer Robert Sherr who found his play with Iggy Pop in The Ignorant before graduating to free jazz outlets and electronics. As painted out in Julian Cowley's feature in the *New Music* 238, Laure Anderson reckons that Tyranny's piano playing resembles "a huge ocean liner pulling out", while *Widago* Music's Kyle Gans hyperbolically: "Good plays piano through this man", which is a lot of hyperbole to illustrate the qualities of a frankly mainstream piano style.

The stylistic territory Tyranny occupies crossesroads Bill Evans and Keith Jarrett, and garnishes itself with just a hint of the George Winston. It's not that Tyranny is a 'bad' piano player. For him it - his pianistic touch is equally light and he's in total control of his instrument. His harmonic sensibility too, is deft and sophisticated, with no point of the harmonic spectrum dismissed through lack of imagination. It's just the high camp of Tyranny's elite taste that's problematic. Most revealing in this regard is his 1976 (revised 2002) composition *A Letter From Home*, where the implied gospel-like atmosphere is swept aside in favour of a peculiarly self-conscious sentiment, as though every carefully composed career of the keyboard is met by an apple pie from Mom and the blinding white glow of Tyranny's taste. The opening Song No. 1 "Peace" resembles so much on technically and harmonically that its closer to overkill issue of taste, while a John Tibbitt-like antiquity and some adventurous excursions to the ends of the keyboard makes *The Other* the most satisfying track on the disc.

Meditation: *Nothing's Changed*. *Everything's Changed* for "electromagnetically stimulated" piano is an attractive soundscape with sustained drones providing a backdrop for pockish piano interventions. But a track apparently named by Henry Cowell called *Spice* - for computer edited harmonics and piano - again descends into staid and self-indulgent, and somehow also as indictment of Tyranny's weaknesses. In total the figures he cites - Henry Cowell, Charles Ives, John Cage and the free jazz tradition - and to wind up producing such bland and humourless music isn't good enough.

URBAN MYTH & STEVE BERESFORD LIVE AT THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE LONELY MUSIC LON01005 CD

BY PHILIP CLARKE

Brighton electroacoustic live improv quartet URBAN MYTH invited Steve Beresford as the first guest on their URM-1 series in January 2003.

The Boomerang

New reissues: rated on the rebound

Despairing for gold: Talking Heads

"I've got money now... Waning sign of things to come." So sings David Byrne, on 1978's *More Songs About Buildings And Food*. Budget has certainly been lavished on *Once In A Lifetime* (EMI R273634 3RCD + DVD), with 55 tracks and 13 video clips selected from the entire lifespan of **Talking Heads**—and Byrne was right. He so many groups who are lavished with the cash of their record companies, they are out of steam trying to keep the hits coming. But as this set proves, it took them a while cruising along rock's ploys and madcaps before they eventually reached their particular nadir to nowhere. Back when they didn't have money, art student Byrne, playing the existential klutz, leighed dumb to ask the Big Questions, what is love, what do we do in a country that acts like it hates its citizens (the formative years of this group were the dying years of the post-Nazi anti-Semitism, even though they made their name during the Carter era), what do we do if someone attacks us?

Randomly, of course, the signature attraction of Talking Heads was Byrne's despairing for gold in the stream of quotidian life. Even in the earliest tracks collected here, like "Love + Building On Fire," "I Wish You Wouldn't Say That," his interest in the banality of the surface of American life is never quite free of the shadows of authority and deletion: is the narrator of "Don't Worry About The Government" really a successful self-made man, or a mediocrity who idly believes himself working for The Man? Th waxes conflicted when courting such imbricages—a hokey amability that might, like John Goodman's Walter in *The Big Lebowski*, slip into violent derangement at one wrong word.

Byrne taps into the sense of new salvation, day after day, that is a peculiar feature of American life: his characters perpetually find themselves waking up in a new town, in a new state of mind ("New Feeling"), or groping with antiscial loneliness they can't explain (the immortal "Pledge Killa"). But the archness was never quite laid to rest. In "The Big Country," which Byrne's notebook describes as "funks, parodies and their emotions (as seen by an impartial observer)... God or someone in an airplane) heartrending geography," the observer catalogues the picture perfect layout of a town before screaming, "I wouldn't live there if you paid me." Facsimiles of Byrne's notebooks show working sketches for an entire album called *The Big Country*, with a map of the USA plastered across at a glance. It never happened for them, but at the same time Laurie Anderson was working on the enormous tape that became *United States*.

The musical arrangements, especially in the early years, are still remarkable—sailing to

Use or *Platt* Smith. A rarely sampled, clippy fill of sunshine guitar shows that, even early on, they were striving to breathe the air of Africa—an interest which Byrne has pursued via the exorbitant World Music releases on his Luaka Bop label: "Uh-Oh, Love Comes To Town" (apes like a Martin shank with a tropicalized tuning of Jamaican steel drum, "Morning Sign" kicks off with dubbed out drum and twangy guitar that could be Tibetan, Hindi or any of the Chicago post-rockers led throughout the three discs, it's impossible to overlook how rusty the Tina Turnout/Chris Frantz rhythm section was, their monotony held in check—whether of their own volition, a remains unclear it's not fairly in and of itself, the group relied on the Afrobeat nights that Eric Shapiro into the mid-period LPs like *Four Of Us* (1979) and *Remain In Light* (1980). Rehearsal after a long left, tracks like "I Zimbra," "Born Under Punches" and "Crossed And Painted" sound caught in a perpetual holding pattern above Aunt Fourth World, never quite able to land. But it's not all disappointments. The pensive, surrealistic chrysalis that monologues "I Am Daring Wildlife" is Byrne's greatest lyrical character, and the song resonates with renewed force in today's threatened cities. Here, and on the tour de force "Once In A Lifetime," the group achieve their highest potential. Disc three, which deals with the group's old age albums *Like Creatures* (1985), *True Stories* (1986) and *Naked* (1988), is almost regrettable, the references to Country rock, FM pop, sport funk and men become like weekly digests into the mill, and Byrne's preciously free delivery gives all Big Sir" by prech on your ass.

A word must be spared for the blemishing but undeniably arresting package, decided in Vladimir Dubovskiy's and Alexander Vinogradov's PolMo frames. Production values are unexpectedly high, with essays by Rick Moody, the ubiquitous David Fricke, memoirs by group members, timelines, great visual documentation that picture links, notes and ephemera from the end of the lifespan, and plenty of photos. The inclusion of *Storybook* (Giant), an entire disc of video promos from "Once In A Lifetime" to "Road To Nowhere," makes it a essential value to hold. But you'll have to construct a special shelf to hold the awkwardly formatted thing, which has the dimensions of a small plank (RV).

The problematic canon of Scott Walker has been raised for the new live CD box set, *Scott Walker's 5 Easy Pieces* (Mercury/Universal 981044 SXCD). The discomfited Noel Hogel has made a career out of feeding uncomfortable in his own skin—at the end of the music he has over made evokes an autumn already shivering at the onset of winter and a spring still recoiling from its shilly touch—and since his last two widely

spaced LPs, *Climax Of Hunter* and *Tit*, he's been pretty much off the radar, a household name known only to the loons in the obit. Page, then, that this ugly package is branded with the hallmarks of the damned down: "The different routes into the heart of Scott Walker," claims the box. Like you need *WH* help once the Chortle-hug symphonic pop of the first two discs takes over. Nothing faulting the music—the problems are all about contextualization, created one assumes by former Julian Coe associate Cally, credited as compiler here. From its dated, inappropriate Helvetica font on the front cover to the shoddy '56 page booklet, mostly filled with unnecessary and glibbling endorsements from artists like Lloyd Cole, Damien Albem, The Corrs and bloody Allan Goldsmith who can't hold a candle to Scott's achievements, there's certainly no suggestion that Engel himself had any truck with the thing in press letters for the thing in December was labelled "An Evening Without Scott Walker". These endorsements are at the expense of more useful information, such as a gallery of photos, more revealing and sensitive essays on the work, perhaps some contextualization, especially with regard to the later operatic music of Tit. Much of that record, by the way, turns up on the fourth disc, *Two Is How You Skipper*, which contains songs from Walker's 80s and 90s. But now Tit is currently available again on Dig City, it's not such a draw.

Disc five, *Scott On Solent*, performs the most valuable task—though you can probably do without rereads like "The Rope And The Coil" and "Man From Reno." It replicates what Walker recorded for various movies since the late 80s, or covered, or, as on "The Seventh Seal," wrote in homage to his canine heroes. The bulk of it features the soundtrack he supplied to Leon Corra's *Pola X*. If you've never owned a Walker LP in your life, this could have been a place to begin. But it's impossible to recommend the box because the entirety of disc three, *An American In Paris*, is mastered through one channel only. It's the last disc in an unimprovably assorted, disassembled package. (RV)

Occasionally in recorded music, it's the guy behind the desk who deserves the plaudits rather than the performer. The reissue of *Earl Parker's* wonderful solo separate sax improvisations *The Swan Decades* (jax 03.06 CD) has become a memorial to the late Michael Gezon, who recorded the session in 1986. Gezon's polymathic brilliance was at its most concentrated when he dealt with sound and his capture of Parker's most drastically evocative sax improvisations, a tribute to the music is serene, refined and multilayered, even though no lyrics or manipulation of the sound occurred. This is the

closest you will get to hearing Parker in his flesh and it's worth documenting the means: direct to two-track on a Sony digital audio processor using a Calixt Mk 4 Soundfield mic system set to Bumblebee stereo 90 degree crossed pair of coincident figure of eight. That's poetry to some ears, and the mention of Alan Blumlein, Gezon's distinguished predecessor, is fitting testimony to Michael's importance. (RM)

Michael Moore has played an important role in recent reevaluation of the dammit for creative music, not least in *Cassette 3* with drummer Han Bennink and cellist Ernst Reijnders. He's a fine alto saxophonist too and a clever composer, fluent in a range of jazz idioms. Three reissues on the Ramsey label illustrate extremely well the consistently high quality of his playing and his versatility. *Home Game* (Ramsey 02 CD) was recorded in New York, in 1989 by **The Michael Moore Quartet**, a loose group with drummer Gerry Hemingway, bassist Mark Helias, pianist Fred Hersh and trumpeter Herb Robertson. The music is urbane, self-possessed, carefully coordinated yet still has the capacity to surprise by taking sudden oblique turns, causing stylistic boundaries to radically shatter mood. Sometimes formal, sometimes freeflowing, the quartet never loses its underlying poise.

World Surf Music (Ramsey 18 CD) was recorded in The Netherlands by **The Persans**, a sextet in which Moore was joined by Reijnders on cello, drummer Michael Votaw, bassist Eric Calmes and the electric guitars of Danny Pines and Dan Licht. It has its roots in mid-70s jazz fusion, although as the title indicates, shoos are projected widely, from bluesy rock to Balkan scales, West African rhythms to free shuffling. Celtic echoes to sound effect (notas, ska to Metal mayhem). The Persans can be relaxed to the point of pugnacity but above all they have continental energy that grants coherence and purpose to their stylistic whirling-disco reel.

Available July's 1988 recording in full (Ramsey 17 CD) features Moore and Votaw on trombone, tuba, bass and mandolin. The group began as the musical component of the Great Salt Lake Mime Troupe. Their origins are audible in the episodic nature of the programme and the acrobatic agility and theatrical tensions between the two terms. There are clear allusions to show time and circus acts in the themes and the pacing, which frequently seems tied to some auto-musical game. Even so, it works very well musically. Another legs is at work, but the playing is highly animated and Michael Moore is heard interacting into yet another corner. (JC) Reviewed by Julian Cowley, Brian Morton and Rob Nung

and chose the Friends Meeting House in Brighton as a venue because of the room's baby grand piano. In the event Beersford used the piano somewhat sparingly, preferring to meet Urban Myth's spacious textures with his own arsenal of electronics.

That said, his subtly positioned place in the opening few minutes — widely spaced, officiously centered — creates a real buzz as they rub gently against Under Myly's emerging soundscapes. Their sounds are attractively elusive, with pointillistic splashes from Jim Black's guitar and Adam Bushell's vibraphone colouring the ongoing score continuously. The plucky quality of Kester Elifritz's flute becomes the odd man out, a relic from an acoustic age thoughtfully reinvented in this context. Elifritz's playing has tremendous variety; heavily textures morph into the electronics, and jet-Asian-sounding scales and inflections hint at a well-judged multiculturalism.

Jim Black provides some surprisingly naked jazz guitar riffs much further down the line that get bubbled back into the electronic background provided by Beresford and Henry Collins's laptop. As the final few minutes appear on the horizon, Beresford and Bushell coincide with a diametrically tender harmonic pattern that the other musicians use as a springboard for whispering asides. It's a sensitive conclusion to an outstanding 46 minutes of improvised music — a rare example of an album that feels too short.

USAISAMONSTER
CITIZENS OF THE CHRONIC
INFRA SOUND 780304 CD

TASHEYANA COMPOST

LOAD-086 CD
BY TOM RIDGE

The music of US/Canadian noise-rockers The Matte Brothers (guitar) and Tom Holman (drums) is a tacky caricature from the outset: primitive, hardcore Prog-analogy? Their latest album *Tscheyensay* (Noise) is a riotous, chaotic splurge of noise, careening freely between wildly uneven tempos and rhythms with deceptive precision. This is the sound of anger and anger smoothed and speeded out through excessive yet complex song structures, of grunting-throat protest, dissolving finally in a vortex of abstract noise, possibly acid-fuelled. Matthew's guitar alternately spouts out hard-tide diamond riffs and howling fuzzballs on noise while Holman's drumming combines frenetic displays of ragged fills with precise gear shifts in speed and direction. They lyricize straight from Native American protest to stream of consciousness versus the "warable duckbill platypus", buried in screams and noise.

Occasionally the results fall short of these ambitions, suffering from either a surfeit of baroque guitar fiddling or a lapse into math-rock patterns, but the overall sense is of energetic and unfettered, barely classifiable music, reflecting the innocent nature of the duo, now Brooklyn-based, but with roots in Charlottesville, Virginia's noise-rock scene. Queens Of The Stone Age pass their 2001 album *Citizen Of The Universe* with 2002's *Maelnion Chronic EP*. Neither is as accomplished or as inventive as their Lord Abacus, but displays another more rudimentary hardcore-buster, leaning toward basic Country rock and whacked-out guitar overload.

VARIOUS
FOLK AND POP SOUNDS OF
SUMATRA VOL. 1

SUBLINE FREQUEN

RADIO JAVA

SUBLINE FREQUENCY

NIGHT RECORDINGS

BALI
SUBLIME FREQUENCIES 57009 CD

BY JASON GROSS

With these compilations, Sun City Girls bassist Alan Bishop has stacked up a trove of the sparsely documented pop music of Indonesia. Together they make for a fascinating glimpse into a mysterious, underexplored musical landscape. Bishop's book is peppered with probing questions about the appropriation of Third World music. Unlike, say, Smithsonian and Nonesuch, Bishop's new label dispenses with scholarly taglines; notes and photos are sparse, track edits are abrupt, and it doesn't even pretend to be an all-inclusive survey of this mostly Muslim archipelago of 17,000 islands with a population size comparable to America's. Instead, with materials gathered from a 1989 trip, Bishop looked to make audio-visual documents ranging from the sounds of civil strife to contemporary pop. The book's 100 pages of notes, credits and translations might have added context, ample audio detail makes these discs rich enough listened experience in themselves.

Dulled from locally produced cassettes of forgotten folk and pop from the 1970s and 80s, the Sumatran CD sports a hybrid of these two styles, rarely heard outside of the area. Though he's 14, yearn found to bring Bishop to the market's sources, he has promised to return to dispense prayers once sales hit six figures. The stew of Arabic and Spanish, Portuguese and gypsy influences obviously made an impression on San City Girls, as a few Sumatran songs have found their way into their repertoire. Though the going may get sticky — The Marcos Group, for example, sounds like Hawaiian lounge music — Sumatran is much more engaging than QOK. Media's recent Asian Takeaways collection Samson's choppy guitars and distant singing recall Studio One producers, while Abbie Haba Group's 14-minute "Silent '92," alternates mezz-voix prayer call chanting with a soaring falset and clanking metal percussion.

The only real folk recordings of the aenias is *Night Hoosings* which provides aural assemblage of Balinese village life. Its titles clue in the context of its 19 brief yet evocative tracks but a little more context wouldn't have hurt. What is causing the frenzy heard on "Cremation Ceremony", for instance? The album's mood ranges from dangerous ("Pelotian Night Walk") to fierce ("Gamelan Rehearsal") to peaceful ("Monkey Night Forest") to joyful ("Luguan Minstrel"). Non-human participants like chirping lizards, savage hounds and singing birds provide an exotic chorus for gamelan ensembles, which range from the unpolished and folkly to tighter, more intricate *ayugan*.

The *Raido Asia* CD is essentially a 'radio collage composition' cutting together broadcast snippets from different stations. Essentially, Bishop's styrene-surfing simulates travel experiences. Each cut contains song snippets, DJ banter, advertisements and drama dialogue. The idea is promising enough but the edits can get jarring. Without the elaborate visuals of dance-accompanied styles like Japanese, some

of the folk ensemble passages start sounding sappy after a while. But the Radio Jaianta montages juxtaposing or overlapping breezy 1960s pop, lovers' rock crooning, Mamooné guitar, Japanese singalong and lo-fi gamelan, or the Radio Bandung collages of heated conversations, two broadcasts heard at once, ghostly drama scenes, Rolling Stones covers, pop music and stereo-shaded disco would do Nuse With Wound proud.

VARIOUS

THE BLUES

HP Q/UNIVERSAL DCL5135762 SMD

BY IAN PENMAN

The Blues OK. Not too much ambiguity there. No, hang on. The Blues™. Is it here: what's that about? Does the "™" simply refer to the cover's (dull, prosaic) illustration? No! It occurs throughout in the text. Mmmmm. Let's look again. Here is a shadowy generic (BLACK) guitarist. Here (in blue) is the phrase THE BLUES™. There here is — above, set off, WAY ABOVE both of these (and suitably enough in WHITE typeface) — the legend: Martin Scorsese Presents: Already, what at first appeared a purely "objective" box set history begins to look riddled with worry little contradictions.

Start again! Open *OK* purely at its core, as object? Well: the box/booklet is rather tackily cheap-looking and one dimensional compared to other, more, more lovingly assembled issues and collections. And badly designed, to boot, one can pull the booklet out of its spine, it's almost impossible to get it back in again. Given that this is an offshoot of a visual work, by visual means, one feels deeply annoyed by. For this *Blues*? It's a US TV series, executive produced by Someone and sponsored by... Wellspaced? (HELL yes) I recall of these old blues discs 'bout going to Chicago in the bluesman's traditional big striped... Beatie... Couldn't they have got Cadillac at least? Seven firms, seven directors, including, Spector, Earl Eastwood and some, but oh! Go! No Wim Wenders But that's 'nough given credit back to haunt us. The *Blues*? How can you trademark the blues? Wake up the steamer, my back collapses three times in a row? And?

Talpo, monkey etc), what's the actual solution? OK. Not much to complain about on the first three CDs. The necessary 'classics' are present and easily in the contributors from WC Nance, Jesse Smith, Son House, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Blind Willie Johnson and Blind Willie McKidd, and there's a scattering of more obscure/old tunes – balance and belief – owing to both defunct neophytes and dwarf collectors. Though I'm bound to say I rarely find any of the more recent recordings to be as seductive – owing to the fact that, of necessity, their mood tends to be all over the place: happy like some mad schizo jivebox from swapping juke to blessed old gospel to atonal/blew to thrash to healthy throat to soporific urban jazz (Christ, you'd have to be on some mean line of new prescription medicine to naturally follow such wild emotional shifts). Still, things only start to go deeply wrong when we hit the mid- to late 60s. The far question is whether what is wrong here is wrong with the box set or an opted-for history: whether this history means (and accurately) that the music of the 1960s is a social/stylistic event in the world as before. Either way, from the exotic anarchy of *Koko* to the

"Wang Dang Doodle" to John Mayall's partially inadequate vocal on "All Your Love" is a rather wide river to cross. You might as well just program Peter Cook and Dudley Moore's "Bo Diddley" sketch and have done with it. (Cook isn't it strange how the Delta blues is best rendered by... effeminate young middle class Englishmen?)

It's not that one feels Mayall — undoubtedly a scholar and a gentleman — is exactly dead, and, certainly not the worst criminal given space here. But from this debatable cross-cultural point onwards the blues — as felt groins or formal attitudes — just seems to evaporate and diminish, longer solos, less spirit. Better recordings, blander voices. The first CD is just painful to behold — one long, smooth, noticeable-by-the-dean slung into a real clinic of over-the-top blues. The second CD, *The Blues™*, here equals style abstracted from soul: condescension or resonance, consumer friendly rather than community useful, mostly pleasant, and ultimately depressing for all the wrong reasons. The fact that Robert Cray, Bonnie Raitt and Kofi M' (and all four solo sections appear when there's no rap to truly diminish. But then there's nothing here with the least bit of stringency or poise, never mind anything more subtly understood. And you begin to think... the inclusion of a Gun Club or Roger Trout, George Clinton or R. Burnside would have burned a truly incenseless hole in the sets; especially, I mean, to me, Thelma Houston or Nina Simone or the Last Poets or even T. Jay, say, are 1000 times more blues than Bill Butlerfield or Robert Cray or any of the other perfectly maimed blues artists who follow. And... But such off-putting Jacks Holland-style would necessitate shifting the selections 'beyond fides' for what actually constitutes *The Blues™* to somewhere a bit more alien and radical, and thought-provoking... and, political, frankly. Maybe the selection is anyway its own worst enemy. After all, once you've introduced people to the awesome spiritual upheaval of Jesse Smith and Howlin' Wolf, how can you be happy that that MTV thing... The Womans' Commission final selection, rather than being illustrative of any blues spirit, ancient or modern, seems merely and uncannily like something, well, Win Win-Win-at-the-dinner-table, going to give atmosphere to the detriment of grace or passion, lost in an over-the-top presentation, where someone is blasted, filled with awe and bewilderment, better fit the attitude of the party. It also rather abuses the set's claim to historical objectivity (?!). Rather, it suggests a situation in which white fans (Womans, Scorsese and Mike Figg's have worked [massive boldwords] — taking their own awakening to blues in the groovy/jammy 60s/70s, and working backwards to contextualize it. [How often explain no many guitar solos, and so much spotlight trained on such a slim, one-dimensional and unimpaired talent as Eric Clapton? Coincidentally, Larry Hoffman's scholarly track annotations do not seem entirely free, themselves, of a certain, ah, unbridge at certain selections — albeit a carefully and pointedly coded profile. As a sleeky soloist, across three or four CDs, and with his name on the cover, he's been a great blues artist, across three or four CDs, and with his name on the cover, he's been a great blues artist. (see www.bluemusic.com).

Avant Rock

Reviewed by David Keenan

CHEER-ACCIDENT INTRODUCING LEMON

NEW ORLEANS, LA: CD

With vocals in French, the parts of fellow Chicago from legions. The flying Lullababies, break glass, Illusion D Safety and the Vandermast 5, Cheer-Accident's big-band sound juggles the double rhythms and stop-starts of juddering live Magnolia and Rana while also incorporating a mass of off-color bursts of onyx. Beach Boys harmonies and distastefully ordinary college rock. Introducing Lemon is produced by Steve Albini and comes appropriately annotated against anything like emotional honesty with shoutily gay locker room vocals, tough play guitars and a primarily cynical approach. Although certain sections are actually sonically engaging, especially how the lumpy sack brass sounds, contrasts with music-based guitars and bass, the combination of wacked time signatures and cross-eyed vocals makes it all but impossible to listen to without conjuring images of Green Day being mock-sectioned in stilettoes. **C**

CLEAR HORIZON CLEAR HORIZON

NEWARK, NJ: CD

Clear Horizon are the transatlantic tape-binding duo of singer/songwriter Jason Bellini and David Sacks. Attack manman David Pearce. The first release is culled from mail experiments, with each player engineering and sonically displacing the other's contribution with distant crackles of interference, tongues of E-bow, plumbic acoustic guitar and shadowing vocals. Unfortunately it represents both players' weakest material, with Bellini's songs in particular sounding like half-schlepped crying out for some colider chaos to fully animate them. Yet Pearce slips away from any direct engagement, choosing instead to dress his melodies with wistful linear lines, a strategy that only loses some attention back onto the perfunctory nature of the central performances. The more abstract tone pieces are the most successful, such as "Sunrise Drive" — a disoriented exploration of celestial ball tones, disembodied chord waves and torrents of feedback. **C**

DARE DEVIL BAND DARE DEVIL BAND

NEW YORK: CD

KINKS/ACID MOTHERS

THE KINKS/ACID MOTHERS TEMPLE
SUB POP SP0206 CD

Dare Devil was the mislabeled title Japanese live drummer Shoji Hanu gave to the duets he cut with saxophonist Peter Biddmann in 1991. Hanu originally intended the Japanese phrase to mean "bar warmer" but wasn't unhappy with the way it came out. With The Dare Devil Band, here a the featuring Acid Mothers Temple's guitarist Makoto Kawabata and bassist Abashi Tajima, the drummer set out to recreate the two tonalities, matching headlining barker funk with retrograde stunts. But the results on this scrappy live recording fall way short of either. Hanu's strange style, all thunderous starts and stops, is better suited to punctuating

the spurts generated by fire-breathing saxophonists than lubricating the eternal fluid flow of electric guitars. Out of a desire to track Hanu's jagged peaks and troughs, Kawabata has stuck on a derivative style that reflects more on Muzak than on his recent work. Much better is "Original Plane," the new Acid Mothers track closing their split CD with US space rockers Kinko. Its technical explosion rebrands itself again and again in euphoric waves of sound. The set also contains a new Kinko track, a Kinko/AMT jam, and a reworked Kinko/AMT jam, none of them rising above an average rehearsal room trash.

DAVIS REDFORD TRIAD BLUE CLOUD

HOLY MOUNTAIN CD

Davis Redford Triad is a vehicle for the psychedelic guitar of second generation Post punker Steven White. In fact, his role is to lay down huge swirling clouds of sustained drone over which the group loops off juddering, reworked electronics and the clack of steel on steel, but in the Triad a more natural guitar sound dominates, with Redford bridging the time and space that separates Kik R. from the Marxist Goddard and San City Girls. Redford, indeed, the 300 comparison is even stronger in time round, especially on "Violent Stayed Front," a whimsical piece of anti-American tongue-slapping. Elsewhere Redford's stringwork is especially impressive on the 15 minute "Wellwood For Over 60 Million Years," which stalks the shadows beneath Rara's monolithic "Krautrock," and the closing "Blue Cloud" — an assemblage of bells and heavy-padded bell-wah which heaves and groans like a blind drunk boy lorne.

ESPERS ESPERS

LOS ANGELES: CD

Based around singer/songwriter and committed vocalist Greg Weeks, multi-instrumentalist Brooke Sullivan and guitarist/vocalist Mag Baird, Philadelphia-based Espers channel reverent forms from directly across the Atlantic. Their ornate take on English traditions are made luminous with writhes of electronic tone, dug-silenced cello and graceful boy-girl harmonies that huddle like smoke. Espers' lyrics populated by ghosts, with Baird's precise, unadorned vocals barely rising above a respectful murmur, as strong drums blast waves of steel strings like shots out of fog. The effort is deeply psychedelic, stirring the events of the album in the twilight underworld mapped by margin walkers like Stone Aron, Donovan and Chelsea Girl-era Nico. But it also has a feeling of anaglyphic dead heightened by the hushed tones and the dense weave of the arrangements, as if the session was recorded deep in the woods. **C**

JAMES WILLIAM HINDLE PROSPECT PARK

MINNEAPOLIS: CD

Following his gaudy debut CD, 2001's James William Hindle, Prospect Park is a much more emotionally demolishing affair. It's dominated by the kind of stung out, dissolute guitar playing that

scarred Neil Young's *Everybody Knows This* is Nowhere, and even the more upbeat tracks sound and. What with its *Dryer Later* stylings, "Hoboken" features beautiful vocal harmonies nuzzling in at 2000' — a kind of customized late 60s comedians. Such an atmosphere is undoubtedly heightened by contributions from the Elephant Six cabal, which includes members of the Essex Green, Ladybug Transistor, Sunshine Fox and Aden. But the single most affecting aspect of Prospect Park is its intimacy. Each track sounds like a broadcast intended for himself, his arrangements being attempts to reassemble things that fall apart long before.

MARK LANEGAN BAND HERE COMES THAT WEIRD CHILL: (METHAMPHETAMINE BLUES, EXTRAS & ODDITIES)

REGGAE BANQUET B00073 CD

Scrambling blues were one of the most ideologically gaudy of the early 90s alternative rock explosion. Mark Lanegan's long-scraping vocal meant there sound like a backwoods Doors, their psychedelic postures firmly rooted in American primitive traditions, informed by punkish contemporaries like Jack Hazzard. It made sense when he flexed out the Gothic take on Country as a solo artist. As a primer for his forthcoming album, however, this eight track EP makes for a depressing failure. From the fluffy cover art onwards, it feels like an attempt to market Lanegan as a second wave's idea of a Tom Waits-style maverick. His gravelly voice is holed to clanking industrial boom machines and a backing group handpicked from blowhards like Queens Of The Stone Age and Masters Of Reality. The ghostly lyrics are several lights years from the awkward beauty of his early recordings. **C**

MINIMOKOTO LIVE

LAST VISIBLE DUO D0048 CD

Rising from the ashes of Tote Vets obsessives and Koji Hana's collaborations Broadstreet, Minimokoto are a more immediately accessible proposition. Their dynamic blues constructions are held together by fast, clean guitar lines colling and swooping around a rhythm section that's liable to alter course in mid-air. The hopping patterns beaten out by ex-White House bassist and drummer Koji Shunaru anchor Kawaguchi's midrange gun, which stalks in a polyglot tongue drawing equal from Rory Gallagher, Jerry Garcia and Lou Reed. But Kawaguchi's remarkable vocal motif defines Minimokoto's sound, his distressed moan giving every track the urgency of deathbed blues. Recorded live in Tokyo in 2002, this album is a much needed corrective to their two patchy studio albums. **C**

MOUNT VERNON ASTRAL TEMPLE MUSICK THAT DESTROYS ITSELF

CRACKED TO CD

Drew Mulholland's formerly Glasgow-bound Mount Vernon Arts Lab's recent relocation to other temporal planes coincides with the

beginning of a creative relationship with fellow time traveler Coli. The first fruits of their collaboration, *Musick That Destroys Itself*, are two heavily polychrome tracks — *Bar*, circling in at 2000' — that imagine the sound of time torn in two. Wounded in a beautiful slow design by Coli's Peter Christopherson, the cover depicts shows a 19th century tomb in London's Brompton Cemetery that is purportedly a time portal designed to Ancient Egyptian specifications. Mulholland crosses the necessary wires in order to access the future from the past with an outrageously heavy cloud of transformative electronics. Its cracked analogues tones serve as a gateway for all kinds of independently inspiring sound snuff. It's one of Mulholland's best releases to date, and early copies come bundled with a bonus disc that features unreleased live and studio works. **C**

PLUGGED EAR LIVED 2003-11-26

THEIR TRICED CD

From the label that brought you Japanese psych group Overhead Party's massive *Idagoo!* Garden CD-R comes this oddity by a collection of renowned underground heads, among them Dendritic Ray Fukusaki, Minneapolis's Massim Kowaguchi, and Mitsunobu Tobata, of Zen Gene and Lennard Stone Machine, taking recently designed postcards at a choice selection of alternative canon classics. Their take on the Ramones'/Heartbreakers' "Chinese Rock" is so loudly offbeat that it threatens to slide out of their hands altogether, while their version of "Summertime Blues" sounds both like a note-perfect model of Blue Cheer's packed-up version and a distillation of the essence of Japanese rock excess. The latter once again hammers home the importance of critically mangled noise to the Blue Cheer to the electronic development of the contemporary Japanese underground. But the set's highlight is Plugged Ear's acid exhumation of Neil Young's "Helpless". **C**

PRIMORDIAL UNDERMIND THIN SHELLS OF REVOLUTION

EMPIRE JONES CD

New based in Texas, Primordial Undermind play heavy effects-laden psychodelia as propelled by an elastic rhythm section that pulses with Can-like man-machine grooves. Based around the guitar and vocals of Eric Am, formerly of Hives Rogers' Crystallized Movement, their law-up has been in an almost permanent state of flux since their first abortive sessions with The Brins Ford. Now settled on a pool of seven musicians, Thin Shells Of Revolution's set their already baroque take on melodic psych belatedly by a battery of horns, bells, acoustic ethnic instrumentation and a mysterious "electric nut." Am's vocals glide horizontally through the most overloaded of tracks, baying to mind The Byrds' Roger McGuinn. The companion is given further meat by their high-flying pass through the Dilated "There Is A Time." Although on points you're left wondering just how great they would sound with a little more dirt in the production, there's more than enough grain to satisfy the grooves of heads. **C**

Critical Beats

Reviewed by Philip Sherburne

AKUFEN ARCHITECTURES 1-2-3

WHITNEY HAUPTSCHEIDT
Within an album, the last copies of this early Akufen 12" from 2000 have mostly made their way from the warehouse into shops, offering the opportunity to assess the remarkably rapid evolution of Marc Ladreit's skippy style. Architectures predates Akufen's trademark "microsampling," in which he purues successive basslines of the radio dad to chunky, frothy bits of live hip-hop and gristly guitar, so his palette of sounds is more limited here than on 2002's *My Way*. What's interesting, though, is the way that Akufen's voicing is already apparent, at best draped in the familiar trappings of more conventional dub techno. Head over heels with woodblock clatter suggests his ongoing fascination with two-step, while scratchy ornaments and spangled chops reserve the spaces where his armoire waves will eventually go.

BLOCKHEAD INSOMNAC HYPNOSIS

NINA TUNE ZEN33144FD 12"

Ninja Tune's new signing, Blockhead, must be a light sleeper, given the title of his debut 12". Insomnac Hypnosis, instead, has an effect on tracks of binary-eyed techno. Head over heels with the world-weary out from vintage blues, soul, folk, and even a surprisingly moving snatch of home aching being out there to the Games. Much like RJD2, Blockhead — also a Tim Simon — favors midrange, waxy vocals, and extended phrases lifted from obscure, darker than blue vinyl tracks. But Blockhead's light sleep enters lead him to a different land of mischief, where he twists and tears at the sung parts like toffee, speeding them up into a goofy refrain on the title track, or slowing them down to an effect not unlike Tim Simon on exiles on "Fractured Port 3," where he acts as the glue holding together fugitive elements — piano, melodious bass — ready to slip away at any moment.

-EGG- DON'T POSTPONE JOY

MULTIPLY RECORDS CD

The first release on the fledgling label run by Montreal's MUTEK festival, Don't Postpone Joy is a collection of parody but, indeed, techno that falls squarely in the MUTEK organization's sweet spot, referencing Kompa's chug, Akufen's swing, and Monclaire's advanced sound design. It's the latter that really makes the record sing — e.g., John, Guillaume, Costa Dumont (his partner John Ray plays the white, though it's unclear what the shell is [the album's alien, presumably, New Get on with it — lol]). Come up in Montreal's electronicos community, which may explain the carefully filtered edges on the disc's dissolving sounds. And while their compositions rely on minimalist forms of repetition and variation, their choice of sample materials embraces most of class or transpositional. Egg on moments at heart, with a penchant for exotic beats and candy oodles like "La Cade" busts with Bollywood strings, "Clara" squeezes lemon

gates, "El Techo" fashions drum beats out of raindrops, and "Kabuki Express" belts out sampled beats that sound sourced straight from Ten 26.

SAMI KOIVIKKO SALMIKKI

SHIMMUSHIP 078904X CD

Sami Koivikko's debut album, Salmikki, puts techno in garbly boots. The Finnish veteran of the Shitkatapult and Fogpeltan labels makes tracks like a water sealed in jerrycan the tabloid out from under the jetting, leaving the china mostly intact. He'll set up a downbeat and then knock it over, double-bounding the one like a mischievous trampolinist. It's not just his rhythms that are innovative, though. While he's familiar to the moody tones of Cologne and Berlin electronic — leaning heavily on bright chord stabs and filtered waves — he also draws on the slap bass and electro-musical interests more often heard in Chicago Japs or MxMx. "Matian" grids away a new baseline modeling early Cabaret Voltaire while handlike and hi-hats stratter underneath. With his latinate aptitude, Koivikko is a master of tone color, playing up contrasting hues and, like Sade's Fania, he hides an unashamedly morose melismos when his catatonic rhythms, a sentimentalist to the last words of analogic decay.

GUSTAVO LAMAS BROTOS

ONITON ONITONS CD

Gustavo Lamas's third release sees the Buenos Aires musician stretching out and exploring terrain outside the bounds of the comfortable dub techno for which he's usually known. "Salvame," the opening track, begins with a shimmering bit of bass, guitar, and bass that might have been lifted from cutouts of Dick Dale's *Punk Rock*, and then goes coming from speaker to speaker, allowing classic folk, digital editing, and special effects to merge in a deftly psychedelic manner. As the song continues, it builds up in swell upon swell of strings, like a delicious collision between Supersister and Four Tet. The rest of Brotos expands on the style Lamas has developed elsewhere. His tracks seem to move at two speeds at once, with languid dub beatlines moving forward at a measured pace while nervous hi-hats and ornamental pings looping around, the effect is like watching a moving car whose wheels, in a glistening, appear to be moving backward.

LAWRENCE THE ABSENCE OF BLIGHT

DIAL DIALON CD/EP

Before he co-founded Hamburg's Dial Records and invented his Lawrence persona, Peter Kersten was a producer. This might go some way toward explaining the seasonal emphasis of his second album, *The Absence of Blight*, which is permeated by the weight and stillness of winter. Built upon skulping techno rhythms and over, occasionally, jaunty electro poppages that wouldn't sound out of place on indie's springest work, the album nonetheless makes

its home in a hibernating cave where every phrase sparkles like breath meeting sub-zero air. Unredeemable chord changes snake through a broad expanse of grey dust, and counterpointal motif fractions stiffer in resistance. It's the out of place elements that make the record such a joy. Instead of wallowing in isolationism, Lawrence cuts the melancholy with imaginative details that illuminate like paper lanterns. Detritus Acid basslines, tiny organs, assemblaged music boxes that chime like alarms for warding off star overload.

PORTABLE CYCLING

BACKGROUND MUSIC COMPANY

After singles for Background, Context and Sided Electronic, Portland — South African born Lawrence, resident Alan Abrams — finally releases his debut album, *Cycling* is a remarkable record that pulls together African chants and drumming, dub effects, and painstaking digital sound design, configuring it all into a haunting tangle of withered leaves and backed apart roots. For a record so chock-full of sounds, textures and ideas — so full that on first listen it appears to be positively cluttered — it opens up to reveal that each sound has been carefully mapped, as though Abrams assigned each bump and click and ping a unique coordinate in a three-dimensional grid. While he takes minimal Techno and Microhouse as his basic template, Abrams never allows the form to dictate more than the basic structure of his tracks. Over this steady 4/4 pulse, micro-organisms create their own time signatures based on algorithmic unspoolings and alien cadences. The whole record is carefully hushed and nearly all at once, as though built from a chorus of whispers. It's a dense, strange, and above all minute disc.

VARIOUS NAG NAG NAG

REACT REACTCD002 CD

London club night Nag Nag Nag has been responsible for accelerating the 80s fashion frenzy in the city. Resident DJ Jonny Sluts double compilation divides the current crop of electrodisco on one disc and Old School 80s electro on the other. Tracks "Burning Down [London's Burning]" and Radio 3's "Start A Fire" are full club anthems which, by their use of vocoder, vintage beats and Juno synth, somehow get away with being dated cutting edge in this context. Steep T Rauschen's "The Game Is Not Over" is much more fun, its gothy pulse being the musical equivalent of Space Invaders; and Chicks On Speed's mildly hysterical "We Don't Play Guitars," featuring lyrics like "We like to use guitars but we don't play guitars," is as other treat. Compiling material, but nonetheless excellent, tracks from DAF ("Der Mueseler"), David Byrne's "Beats, Aides And The Arts," The Normal and, of course, Robert Wyatt's "Nag Nag Nag." CD somehow renders the previous disc of 80s warehouse almost redundant. (Anne Hyde Nease)

WARMDSEK GUERO VARIATIONS

A POSTERIORI RECORDINGS AP000015 12"

Warmdisek's Guero Variations, composed of samples of a tapped, struck and bottomed piano, was a brushed and buffed variation of post-Chan Reaction dub techno that perfectly fit its author William Selman's chosen moniker, conjuring the pulse-warmed impact of palms on the meek disk. On this 12", the Chicago musician offers still his two more variations "Guero(Band)" knocks with metronomic regularity under a wash of unethered chords before spinning head over heels into tumble-dry techno. "Guero(Polymorph)" is a quieter affair in which every tickle of the instrument maps out so clearly as a hammered-stick keyboard cover as an empty hall. Stephan Mathieu melts the source material into a fluttering array of sinewaves that's all but beatless, displaying his characteristic sensibility for minuscule variations in tone. Megan's Little Toyer, meanwhile, whistles Selman's material down into a splintered rhythm section sagging the melodic midrange on its heart-beat-induced sleaze.

WASTELAND SPIRIT SHOTS EP

TRANSPARENT TRANSDIS 12"

Nearly a year after the Transatlantic duo of DJ Soul and I-Sound released their *Ameri Fire* album, the pair resurface on I-Sound's Transparent imprint with *Spirit Shots*, a four-track EP of grimy dub damage. This is seafloor music, alive with clicks and pops, enormous hair knooks, and so many pounds of pressure per square inch that your eardrums buckle under the weight. *Spirit Shots* might be more straightforward than *Ameri Fire* — blasts of noise are relatively tempered, and thudding beats model themselves after traditional dub/Mexican arrangers — but it still makes its home inside the gutted inwards and barked lungs of forms that usually show a roarer face to the world. *Spirit Shots* goes less lively under seismic wobble, and soaks out away at the whole mass until it sounds less like a song and more like an object that's been distressed, desiccated and desaturated.

ZINC PEOPLE 4

PI RECORDS NO 000012 CD

Breaking producer DJ Zinc leaves behind his former, direct approach in favor of a subtler style that's heavier on the spectroscopic bass drum. The Acid basslines and whiplash cracks are still there, but they burrow into the mix like a screw-faced bug burrowing into his hoodie. Refracting the ongoing downsizing of UMG releases, the single offers only a vocal me and an instrumental. Strange, it seems increasingly a music for DJs, downloaders, and pirate listeners — but not recent buyers. On the vocal mix, MC Opium lights its sty himself out from the wailnate of bass and snare, exhorting listeners to "look at me as I show them into the heart of the wasteland." □

Dub

Reviewed by Steve Barker

ALPHA & OMEGA/ JONAH DAN SPIRIT OF THE ANCIENTS NEW BANGTOWN, PA & OMEGA SOUND 9604 CD

It's typically generous fashion Alpha & Omega celebrate their 20th album release with another UK roots artist, Jonah Dan. And it's business as usual — rather than pushing the dub envelope they are content just to give it a damn good looking. There are more guest contributions here than on most of their previous outings combined, including full-on Senia Pansino on the Herb-Alto inspired opener "Sapes Me!" (which reprises as a killer dub later in the set), UK roots stalwart TennaTenn on the meditative title track — itself a name of Brian Auger's "Spirit World" — and Italy's BR Stylax on "Na Mea Sadrax," the keynote tune of the set. Jonah Dan is so tough. He holds up his side in this fiercely clubb with full honours, especially on the slow bawler "Chinese Connection" and "Inner Sanctuary" (also known, on which he is joined by Paul Fox), the A&O did have never let their consistently high standards slip and have retained full control over their catalogue since Daniel in the Streets. Their worldwide reputation is deserved — along with the discopies, they remain the standard bearers for UK nu roots dub.

CREATION REBEL STARSHIP AFRO ONU SOUND/BEAT RECORDS CD

Released for the first time about four years ago in the German series of On-U Master Recordings, Starship Afro is back out now via Sheswood's Far East connections in Japan and comes with an additional four tracks — hopefully a standard feature of this new batch. The album first appeared in 1980 on Sheswood's short-lived 40 Tracks label with credits recycled from a Creation Rebel session for the unlikely DJ Superstar, who rapped Mexicano style, but he's heard here in full rootsful glory on "Clasicoa Rootz" Prince Far I's hitman aide "in I Father's House" sounds like a more genuine, whilst Jah Wootch's "Give Me Power" is followed by splashy tune rewind into a top Nocturnal style dub, introduced by Dr Pabla's far south of the River Thames' melodic. Style Scott provided overdrive with six other personalities, among them Oshisa's Del, creating one of the most distinctive On-U dub moments, where the effects were dropped in third as the masterpiece ran backwards on the final minutes. Strange that the biggest psych-out of all On-U dub outings should have such a prosaic origin. Also scheduled for release in this series are Dub From Creation and Rebel Vibrations.

NOISESHAPER THE SIGNAL DIFFERENT DRUMMER/DIPS CD

It made English the sound of Different Drummer means the sound of Chicago's market of the mid-1970s. The sound of the decade. Also him and the Pansinians follow with their excellent debut. Pansinians follow with a set some more at the mainstream with the

introduction of a whole new of guest vocalists, including Kasey Asante, Wido Jelatche, the seemingly self-replicating MC Teard, Blood And Fire. Sound System's live MC mastery. Spiny Lee, Justice Owen and, shared with laboratories. Al-Hass Sound System, Farid R. Spiny Lee has obviously learned well at the feet of such dubs as Ranking Joe, as his chatting on the lively jump-up the tune attracts. But that's one of the few highlights, as the enmeshing thump of dub House, particularly on "Sunstano" and "Cortez", gets bland and depressing after a while. After all, if I need this, I can just go and listen to my old Ken City albums.

ORCHESTRA MYSTIQUE YOUTH IN DUB DRAGONFIRE/BEAT CD

The musical person that is Youth was born in the late 1970s in the spark caused by the collision of punk and reggae. His work with Killing Joke and later, Brilliant, confirmed his burgeoning status as an innovator, which fully flowered as dub clashed with Ambient in his work with the Orb in the early 90s. Still a talented, original artist, he also stands guilty as the unwitting progenitor of 1000 tedious dance acts in the lower subgenres of House, which provide semi-waiting for the post-Go go brigade.

Youth is an actually a various artist set, with that really at the norm here. But as track after track bears sonic overtones from the Indian subcontinent, the most obvious, transparent influence proves to be that of his occasional collaborator, the Sun of Anqui's Milky Waydada. This is at its most prominent on the opener "Uthang" — remixed from Celtic Rhythms with Rungit Sengupta — and the epic single "Riders On The Dub" featuring Youth's the Khumbia Mele Experience with and coming UK reggae DJ Brother Chorus. Nobody does the spaced out dub better.

PRINCE FAR I HEAVY MANNERS: THE ANTHOLOGY RHYTHM TIDOC/44 38CD

Prince Far I was shot dead just over 20 years ago, but he did not get to reach his 40th birthday, but the DJ's voice always gave the impression of an elderly wise man — gently steering or harshly chiding in tune. Although best remembered as having the vocal tones of coke being crushed behind an opening coffeehouse door, Far I also had the most adorable of tender manners. And perversely, his occasionally tearful delivery would have an uplifting effect on all of those who heard him. All that and more is found in this welcome collection, which brings together four albums that have been absent from the record shelves for some years. Dating from the late 70s through to 1983, this two disc set comprises the albums *Free From Sin*, *Jamaican Heroes*, *Voices Of Thunder* and *Musical History*, with a couple of additional tracks loaned from Roy Cousins.

As such, it's more of a document than a purely listening set, for as much as you might lose Far I, listening to four albums straight through is a tough challenge — even for the most dedicated

fan who will be rushing to match up some of the dubs and banning new running orders. Dave Katz bats him out of the Scotch strainer and as usual contributes finely detailed notes.

SYSTEMWIDE IMPURELY REPUEED: SYSTEMWIDE REMIXED SRI 9806113 CD

Bestions of the Pacific North West's experimental dub scene — which is becoming an increasingly difficult life to defend — Portland's Systemwide felt confident to give up tracks from their *Pure And Applied* set for remix treatment. European club sons lined up include Joe Train, Jah Warrior and Twilight Circus, who all turn in competent but predictably identifiable efforts. A slowly stretched and twisted "Rope Up" is the real find. It comes from space kings Re-American who — for a real surprise — could have been given the whole job. Swayze's slowbuck remix on "People Of The Book" is also a treat, stripping down the rhythm at times to a pulsing, palm, honeyed bass. Other dissemblages feature After, El-Hogee's Dubtense Science, Deceat and Duke Strother.

10FT GANJA PLAN MIDNIGHT LANDING FROM HURRICANE CD

Their name and album titles alone suggest that this is a wacky, throwaway US reggae group, especially as they are an offshoot of John Brown's Body. But the truth lies elsewhere. The follow-up to *Midnight Landing Strip* is modern roots reggae of the highest order. Although the opening melodic track "1000s Weight" invites an easy shot *Amelias* Public comparison, it's decidedly different to the late virtuoso's signature sound. There may be influences at work here — Obba-Barin particularly — but 10ft Ganja Plan are no mere copyists, varying the least atmospheric and least thoughtful than any. Standout tracks are "Kissed At The Feet" with its languid brass getting louder as the track progresses, and the starting "Chanting Myself" with what sounds like a cello undergoing dub treatment. The vocals tend not to reach the same high standards as the instrumentalists, as "Merry" proves. Here they follow a template set by Bob Marley and the I Three. Should this relative weakness be addressed, their third album will be even better.

VARIOUS JAHSON INVASION WAKESB W094 CD/EP

AZUL/MIKEY JARRETT ROCKFORD ROCK/KLU BY KLAN WAKESB 170 13"

As the Rhythm & Sound boys dig deeper in the crates of Lloyd Balfour's Bames, the tunes get heavier; on this new 12" release, the great Chieftain's Funky Lion's Lizard doesn't an immortal. Studio One rhythm as its very own. This one has been versioned many times and it's still moving the movement. It should be at least to give any remaining disbelievers that wider recognition for Chieftain's as the dearest emcee in reggae is

long overdue. The flip has Mikey Jarrett chattering a righteous trade against the Klan on Wayne Jarrett's "Bubble Up" rhythm.

The story of Jahson Invasion replicates the angle of Studio One's *Pravda* Chronos, where a London-based reggae fan put together a tape for friends, which prompted Lloyd Bames to pick up the lead and issue a compilation of some of Wackies' remixed and heavier tunes. "Over And Over" by the Immortals' Bobby Sarkis is a mysteriously one away rhythm leading into Roy Carr's "Black Girl", then versioned in single style by Sherrington Science. But top marks go once again to Chieftain's take on Wayne Jarrett's "Darling Your Eyes" redid as "Pipe Pipe" and the great London "Sugar Minott on a horns mix of his "Sometimes Your Girl".

VARIOUS STUDIO ONE MUZIK CITY COSMO JAZZ/SHOCON SACD

Cosmo's Muzik City opened in East Croydon Street, Kingston, at the end of 1959, and went on to distribute the productions of Clement Dodd on a series of labels such as All Stars, C.A.N., Downbeat, Muzik City, Supreme, Wackies and Cosmo. The Studio One imprint actually led off three years later and from its vast catalogue comes this monster 63 track five CD collection. The set essentially collects the previous standalone releases Studio One Rockers, Studio One Oh, Studio One Rockers, Studio One Soul and Studio One Scream (Instruments). But as it sells for less than £40, it's the ideal pot of entry for any newcomer to reggae. With its rhythms and tunes tried, tested and proven on countless dancefloors, the music will live forever.

TAPPER ZUKIE WAKESB W094 CD

Alan H. Warner is supposedly one of those great unmissed DJ albums. Now at last everyone can see what the fuss is about. The album's tracks were cut in the UK for Clive Bushby and released on the Count Sledge label in 1974 after Zukie had returned to Jamaica. The rhythms were a mixture of one-ways and releases. "When Zukie Day Yah" is Lloyd Pansino's "Slingshot", "Black Cerebral" is from Jimmy Haden's classic production of the same name cut on Errol Dunkley and "Simpler Dub" reworked another Lloyd Pansino tune, "Ordinary Man", recorded for Islands. If these selections prove anything, it is that Zukie had great taste. These rhythms have proved the test of time, and they are just as popular today. That said, the DJ actually hit the militant chanting chant of the "MFLA" from the Kik albums of the same name, which will be forever remembered for rhyming the title with the couplet double "Natty going on holiday... To Angoria?" they think. Consequently, Alan H. Warner was forgotten until a remix just four years later, supported by Perry Smith and Leroy Kasey Me Labet, out of Merv Hill, New York. In return, Zukie's tossing on the album still sounds sharp and inventive, and the UK built rhythms stand up well to the A-generated staff. □

Electronica

Reviewed by Chris Sharp

HERVÉ DIASNAS LES BUIVEURS DE BRUME WINDCUT RECORDS

Les Buiveurs De Brume (which translates, I think, as The Fog Drinkers) is a collection of music composed by Hervé Diasnas for a five-piece modern dance ensemble who go by the name. Naturally, a release like this loves the listener gazing to imagine the choreographed performances that should accompany the sound, but the acknowledgement that there is an invisible artistic structure inextricably linked with these compositions somehow opens them up to the imagination rather than closing them off. As you might expect from music for dance, Diasnas relies heavily on a range, once-hatched rhythms, but he draws them from interesting sources — the stuttering jangle's on "La Tentative" could come from a Moroccan shadow-play sequence, while the wayward chords of "Le Petit Pâté" take the intuitive twinkle of gamelan. Elsewhere the influence of Ligeti's percussive experiments shines through, but there are a few moments where the austerity lets up — the sampled snarl of John Adams's *Shaker Loops*, which briefly emerges from the low contours of "Les Tapes", is a winning surprise of conventional harmony.

ANDREW DUKE TAKE NOTHING FOR GRANTED COGNITION AUDIOWORKS CANSO CD

It's easy to overestimate the importance of a composer's geographical location when considering their music, but you can't help thinking that in the case of Andrew Duke, there might be some relationship between the militant starkness of *Take Nothing For Granted* and the fact that he resides at an acute remove from many of his contemporaries in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Duke has been refining his approach to modern digital composition since the late 1980s, and the very least you can say about the latest of his many releases is that it's the work of a man very much in control of his ideas. *Take Nothing For Granted* is a series of sparse, crinkled spaces whose chilly crevices are animated by ultra-springy dub techniques and a radical approach to stereo placement: A track like "Satiate" is well named, as it glistens sleekly of renegade sound slowly together, as meticulously incremental progress is a perfect analogy for the operation of the album as a whole.

EIGHT FROZEN MODULES THE ABDUCTION OF BARRY OORLIKHOOF MUSIC ORTHY CD

As soon you're plunged into the jangling tension of the opening salvo "in the midst of ____e idiom" — one part Bernard Herrmann's score for *Psycho*, one part Eino Leino's Neuberger's "Das Schöbner" — one thing's for sure: this one isn't going to be a walk in the park. *Eight Frozen Modules* is one of many pseudonyms adopted by Carlanton Ken Gibson, and his interest in multiple personalities (as the title of his previous album *Through Psycho's Different Rooms*) suggests a little deeper than that of most home studio explorers. The Abduction Of Barry is a moody work, and its fragmentary track titles ("...code

episode", for instance, or "...live, self...flected") motion towards a deep psychic disintegration. Much of the music is manually playful, a bedded, sporadic reassembly of a million featured notes which takes the choppy elaboration of 1983-era dark Arjans into retrogressive and resolutely undark spaces: The softly swelling evocation of "a...ring to sea", for bringing things to a close, is despite its modest title, a decided relief.

FISK INDUSTRIES THE ISLE OF WIGHT EP HIGH-POINT LOWLINE HARPOON CD

The Isle Of Wight might not be the most glamorous holiday destination in the world, but something about it seems to have struck a chord with London-based producer and visual artist Mark Ranson, who is the scene architect behind Fisk Industries. This is Ranson's debut EP, and it offers six appealing tracks which weave vaguely radiophonic analogue synth noises through satirically kinetic, punchy beats. The title track opens — somewhat inauspiciously — with the sound of tapping wheels, but nothing on here is straightforwardly bucolic. Even if the music does come filtered through a faint sense of nostalgia, it's all firmly rooted in a quest for propulsion. Apart from the gentle interlude "Le Langues", every track is urged forward by trawly textured breaks and given weighty ballast by generous swathes of cybernetic low end.

GLIM MUSIC FOR FIELDRECORDINGS KARATE JOE KIOSK CD

Glim is the work of the hyperactive musician Andreas Berger, who somehow managed to generate this solo debut while also contributing to at least three other projects (the Cheimant Roag, Mers Rous and Corvino) who have over the last 12 months started to make serious waves in Vienna. Maybe Glim exists to provide a little space where he can draw breath — *Music For Field Recordings* gathers together a series of luminous, slow motion and exquisitely freighted pieces which combine assuaging glitches, plangent chimes, tidal sweeps of digital texture and the gentle gurgle of acoustic guitar into wonderful, shimmering cohesion: the ability to conjure a measure of orphaned approachability out of electronic rage is something that Andreas Berger shares with Christian Fester and very few others. The recording and spanning 15 minutes of "Something" suggest that *Music For Field Recordings* might well be heralding the arrival of a significant new voice.

KID 606 KILL SOUND BEFORE SOUND KILLS YOU PEACOCK RECORDS CD

Here is one conflict that, however frenetically rapid it becomes, takes place upon those harping desert mounds where Mike G. Coyote hunts Rounder with relentless abandon. So it's hardly surprising to discover the latter's distinctive act, accompanied by a cartoon ballet in film, has been retained in the Kid's album in its of his

recent "The Illness" 12", which opens this manic hyperreal spiral of dancehall graffiti. However bloody things get, its really only an artistic ink, shrewdly applied and capable of the most intricate effects. Breaks and beats are neatly stacked out of history with each other on "Sweetbooked" and the latter notably "Buckie Up". Ecstasy Motherfucker", originally released on the flip to "The Illness", continues to defy all laws of physics. Continuously accelerating to a point of furiously oscillating stasis, it comes dangerously close to overshadowing the Kid's more reflective moments, like the pastoral "If I Had A Place This Would Be It" and the barbed abstractions of "Total Recovery Is Possible". Listeners who find the textured and treated explorations of The Esplanade Street 12" intriguing, but a little too close to the world of the same low could do worse than to check out the music of *Book*. This Australian jazz piece are all in their early twenties, but they share with their older contemporaries The Hecks a questing sort of ease, as this collaboration with Benifer Jan Jelinek (aka Farben and Gerny) convincingly demonstrates. For the Kid, the immaculately subtle gossamer improvisation of the Scott La Paro and Bill Evans duo is not merely a vital touchstone — it's also a springboard into the future, and when they encountered Jelinek's album *Loop-finding Jazz* (Rising, something close to On 7-2-1), they effortlessly flew out the piano-bass-drums Exams blueprint with Jelinek's found sounds and digital fragments, and the resulting hybrid is truly bewitching. Crucially, the loops aren't merely a source of texture — as well as an otherworldly and emotionally resonant sense of distance, they bring to the music a surprising complexity and an involving degree of rhythmic literacy. On a track like "Neckless" the modus operandi conjures a heady, swift forward motion.

ANTHONY MANNING A MANNING COMPENDIUM UNDEARABLE RECORDINGS UNDEAR0004 CD

Well, this is a pleasant surprise. Anthony Manning was — like his erstwhile record label initial — an acoustic measure of the mid-80s, and its refreshing to be able to report that the compositions that make up *A Manning Compendium* (and they comprise a good percentage of his total output) sound as great compelling and distinctive as they did when they were first released. Manning's debut — *Electric Winters* (1984) — was the product of an intuitive talent making ground in serendipitous fashion with a Roland drum machine, and although Manning's music developed quickly from these sparse experiments, he never left the need (few more of his contemporaries) to debate in what manner he chose to write into the voids of ambient electronics. As a result, releases like *Black In Pink*, *Polypolyphony* and *Chromatone* *Nebula* combined the timeless clarity of prime Detroit techno with a welcome, Eno-like quirkiness of approach. A piece like the ten minute "Chromatone Nebula" included here, is a poised measure of ambient evolution, and an elegant argument for Manning's continued significance.

MINOTAURO SHOCK RINSE MELODIC MELODIES CD

It's been a couple of years since Minotaur Shock's debut album *Chiff Chaffs And Willow Warriors* appeared, and the bad news is that there's no immediate prospect of a follow-up. Instead David Edwards is the man behind the quirky pseudonym, and Chiff Chaffs showcased a refreshing playfulness, an unobtrusive command of melody and the ability to make slithering, polyrhythmic beats slip through the mix with uncanny grace. Rinse brings together tracks from the first two Minotaur Shock EPs (*Magabells* and *Moving Brian*), making them available on CD for the first time, and adds a couple of previously unreleased recordings. These latter include

Edwards's recent remixes for the likes of Normal Position, Hint, Andy Votel and Body Down Jazz. It's a real reminder that attempts to pigeonhole him under the fashionable banner didn't tell the whole story. Ranging from the "Philo Glass goes B-boy" mash-up "Don't Be A Slave To No Computer" to the gently insinuating, BôNéan drift of "Lady Came From Baltic Water", Rinse demonstrates a completely convincing breadth of imagination.

TRIOSK MEETS JAN JELINEK 1+3+1 —SCAPE SCENE CD

Listeners who find the textured and treated explorations of The Esplanade Street 12" intriguing, but a little too close to the world of the same low could do worse than to check out the music of *Book*. This Australian jazz piece are all in their early twenties, but they share with their older contemporaries The Hecks a questing sort of ease, as this collaboration with Benifer Jan Jelinek (aka Farben and Gerny) convincingly demonstrates. For the Kid, the immaculately subtle gossamer improvisation of the Scott La Paro and Bill Evans duo is not merely a vital touchstone — it's also a springboard into the future, and when they encountered Jelinek's album *Loop-finding Jazz* (Rising, something close to On 7-2-1), they effortlessly flew out the piano-bass-drums Exams blueprint with Jelinek's found sounds and digital fragments, and the resulting hybrid is truly bewitching. Crucially, the loops aren't merely a source of texture — as well as an otherworldly and emotionally resonant sense of distance, they bring to the music a surprising complexity and an involving degree of rhythmic literacy. On a track like "Neckless" the modus operandi conjures a heady, swift forward motion.

VARIOUS METROMETRO WAVE METROMETRO CD

Metrometro provides an oblique glimpse at the wealth of electronic music making in Lisbon (Lisbon), as these things tend to be, by the Portuguese Ministerio Da Cultura and Instituto Do Arte Contemporânea, the project invited musicians and multimedia artists to compose "functional music" for playback on Lisbon's underground stations. It's unclear whether the concept ever made it further than here, but this *Metrometro* idea ought to be implemented in subway systems around the world. It's anyone's guess what commuters would make of the ultra-abstract digital beatlines offered up by some contributors — "Wave" by The Producers being a case in point. Other offerings are more obviously relevant to the scheme — "Drop" by Pedro Cabral Santos, offers electroacoustic trillies and plosives which could have featured a platform into a stakelike-restored subterranean cavern, while "Magabell" by Twinkendream is built on the fond of restlessly rippling cello motif that animates Steve Reich's *Different Trains*. All told, it's a refreshing alternative to the backdrop of crowdpleasers that buskers routinely reflect on most underground dwellers. □

Global

Reviewed by Clive Bell

RABIH ABOU-KHALIL: MORTON'S FOOT

Rabih Abou-Khalil is a Lebanese-born soul player. His music is present in Dawn Best magazine this week. A unique hybrid that successfully spans the worlds of traditional Arabic music and jazz. For me, albums are always living. And yet Abou-Khalil's brand of World jazz – tuba, clarinet, accordion, frame drums – is revered by European audiences and glorified with awards. This is his tenth release on Afro, following up large scale projects, film scores and a solo outing, and is devoted to his loving group. Extra colour comes from the astonishingly best sounding of Sardinian singer Gavino Murgu. Abou-Khalil's writing displays enough rhythmic complexity for a Prog rock group, and an impressive versatility, all his melodies seemingly consisting of thousands of notes. The playing himself is technically impressive and sweetly accessible – no disturbing guitar tones or genuine Arabic scales here. I'm left totally unmoved by the whole thing, a drily display of European sophistication and a music that has forgotten any need for emotional content.

ENSEMBLE IBN ARABI: ARABIC-ANDALUSIAN SUFI SONGS

IBN ARABI: ARABIC-ANDALUSIAN SUFI SONGS (LONG DISTANCE 0450105 CD)

An Andalusian Arab, Ibn Arabi, born in Spain in 1165, who spent his life teaching, writing and travelling the length of the Islamic world, until his death in Damascus. Sufis were and are regarded as troublemakers heretics, and there is a story of an imam caught by a lunatic by feeding her bread baked on a fire fuelled by Ibn Arabi's writings. The Moroccan ensemble bearing his name renews a sacred and secular music from the Andalusian tradition, and is based in the heart of the linguistic culture. Hassan Tassoul on tar and Ahmed al-Khalil on qanun either direct the group. The graceful singing of the young Abdallah al Mansour al Khiligh, trained at Lingens Conservatory attend a set of medieval Sufi lyrics, plus a couple of recitations from the Koran in the delicately melodic Andalusian style, a world away from the harsh wailing of the Islamic mainstream. Beautiful interludes are played on oud, qanun, violin and fly flute, and the whole album, recorded in Morocco and made in France, has an unusually rich sound.

ENZO FAVATA: MADE IN SARDINIA

CCNY CD 99092 CD

Sardinia in Sardinia is an example of a well-informed jazz musician being outstaged by the sheer power of the traditional music he respects and loves, and desperately wants to marry into his own musical constructions. Enzo Favata plays sax and bass clarinet, and the melancholy sweetness is his writing suits his homage to Sardinia. His group – bass, guitar, banjo and drums – weave a series of attractive tunes around their contributions from two male voices quartets and the launeddas (a type of reed pipes) of Gargano Oris. There are also samples of dialect from a grumpy local who sounds like The Falls

Mark E Smith. Much of the playing is fine, and the two unaccompanied vocal tracks are stunning. The problem is whether Favata has anything new enough to stand next to the traditional material. Both the singing and the bandmates are anointed, dense, moribund sounds, incompatible with the why whyness of New Jazz. Strangely even the choir's outrageous harmonic shifts make Favata's jazz change sound bland and uninteresting. Maybe the only way forward for a trad quartet like Cucaorda Di Castalerio is this kind of collaboration, in which tasteful acoustic guitar chords are layered under their voices. But the end result feels decadent, like sponsoring Stings.

HÜRLAK: BUCAREST BLUES

HÜRLAK: BUCAREST BLUES (AFR MUSIC 000000 CD)

An acoustic quartet from Tours in central France, Hürlak's scintillating, rapid-fire melodies are steeped in Balkan and gypsy traditions. A Turkish touch here, flamenco far there – the whole led up with jazz improvisation. Geline Roumet's scampy rhythm guitar and Eric Collin's bass serve as support for Jean-Christophe Rouet's gentle wails and the guitar ecstasies of Thierry Ballist, who pens all the material. The playing is sinuous and the pace hectic, only slowing marginally for Rouet to meditate on a few long notes. The quartet have wisely broadened their colour palette by including guests such as virtuoso piano, accordion, sax and most welcome of all, the dark Iranian zarb drum of Keyvan Chahraman. For some the whole exercise may be over-the-top, but it's a musically enjoyable hour of tunes and "homages". Hürlak's guitar duet with Roumet, proves that Django Reinhardt's gypsy jazz is alive and in sparkling form in France.

THE KING'S MUSICIANS: ROYALIST MUSIC OF BUGANDA-UGANDA

THE KING'S MUSICIANS: ROYALIST MUSIC OF BUGANDA-UGANDA (AFR MUSIC 000000 CD)

The royal court of Buganda (southern Uganda) used to employ many musical ensembles, resulting in an unusually high degree of professionalism. On these astonishing recordings from the 1960s and 80s, singers are accompanied by bustling, tumbling drums and flutes, all played with remarkable skill. A long xylophone is beaten by six men in interlocking rhythm, with almost human speed and precision. Coriopian flutes counterpoint celebrate the royal birthday, drawn on by high energy drumming. The deep buzzing of the omanga bow harp is a head-spinning sound, played so fast as to become tedious. The only let-up in this furious storm of courtly partying is a song about legendary warriors. These great recordings of a vanished tradition were made by Peter Cooke, and like the gumbato dancing disc here, come from the British Library Audio Archive.

MEXICO: THE HUASTECA DANCES AND HUAPANGOS

THE HUASTECA DANCES AND HUAPANGOS (AFR MUSIC 000000 CD)

The Huasteca is 6/8 away of the Mexican huapango is a complex compost of influences

from Spanish folk, rhythms from Africa and the West Indies, and pre-Hispanic Indian ritual. Two guitars, a violin and a vocal that keeps flipping into falsetto provide the music of the Huasteca region, around Veracruz and the Gulf of Mexico. This first survey of the area offers 30 tracks from a dozen groups, including local acknowledged masters Los Camperos De Valle and Los Temascalchines. Also outstanding are the two brothers and a sister making up the combo Desparato Huasteco. Contrast comes from the village of Chalmre, where harp and guitar play harvest dances in honour of Moctezuma, the last Aztec emperor.

OMOUO SANGARE: OMOUO WORLD CHORUS

OMOUO SANGARE: OMOUO WORLD CHORUS (WCD007 5900)

It's the new classical music, it has saved Radio 3's bacon, and it's blanding out into a mega-selling international style as fast as it can. Yes, it's World Music, and here is a double CD retrospective from a major artist, Oumou Sangare from southern Mali. Her stunning voice and jarring kamalenjeng (youth's) harp are always there, but increasingly overtopped by European production values and British horn sections as we move from 1990's *Moussouli* to 1999's *Wooden*. This is an extensive dip into Sangare's four albums for World Circuit, with eight new songs previously unreleased on CD. All good drum fun that will offend no one – apart from male chauvinists and polygamists back home in Mali, where they understand the words.

MERI TITOLA: MERI TITOLA

MERI TITOLA: MERI TITOLA (REC REC HM114 CD)

Meri Titola, my research tells me, is a Master of Music on the harmonium, at the folk music department of Finland's Sibelius Academy. But here she is lead singer on a highly original album. Accompanied by a quartet of cello, harps, flutes and gusseton, Titola tracks a dozen songs, both original and traditional, with great confidence and a kind of free floating impressionism. Free improvis and throat singing are referred to, but this musical vision is Titola's own. The other musicians' restrained tone pairing allows her line, affecting voice to take centre stage. There's plenty of space and top grooves Nordic melancholy, but occasionally Titola turns up the heat, and the whole group leap into wild exuberance with palpable delight. "Yess!" is a lively splash of folk-wood sound promising. Like the album as a whole – 12 tracks in 35 minutes – it's surprises and does the job in less time than expected. Risk-taking and underachievement are a rare combination, and Titola is a talent to watch.

VARIOUS: GUMBOUT GUITAR: ZULU STREET GUITAR MUSIC FROM SOUTH AFRICA

VARIOUS: GUMBOUT GUITAR: ZULU STREET GUITAR MUSIC FROM SOUTH AFRICA (AFR MUSIC 000000 CD)

Recorder Jovet Topp Paragon is now curator of the International Music Collection at the British Library Sound Archive. But in the 1980s, he as

student in South Africa, she joined a gumbato dance team in Durban, and that is how she made these excellent recordings. A synchronised cross between Free Asaire and military drill, from gumbato dancing developed among migrant labourers in gold mines, and quickly evolved into a competitive form. The ideal accompaniment was guitar, accordion and violin, but violinists were few birds, and most of these recordings feature Blanka Mkhize's guitar and various concertina players. Mkhize also performs songs, unleashing spontaneous lyrical streams of comment on current social conditions. The last two tracks are by Albert Nene, another gumbato guitarist with a picking style full of chiming arpeggios. One of a new series from Topo dipping into the Sound Archive, this release has lively and informative sleeve notes, including an invitation to investigate the Sound Archive and hear more Topo Paragon's Collection can be searched at www.bl.uk

VARIOUS VOICES: ISOMERKLEYA GWET

VARIOUS VOICES: ISOMERKLEYA GWET CD

Isolated from mainland Europe, Iceland's music failed to develop along continental lines. Instead, a domestic tradition of sung songs, called Rimur, remained unchanged for an extraordinary 500 years. Just before it was all swept away, recording technology arrived on the scene, and now this collection has been compiled from the archives of the Árni Magnússon Institute. The oldest recording is from 1903, though most date from the 1960s. These are intimate, mournful challenges of poetry, unaccompanied, and each singer has a personal style. Rimur were produced by known authors and sung in the home. A good singer made a living by travelling from town to town. Besides Rimur, hymns, lullabies and a pre-19th-century ballad "Isomerkleya" are also presented. "The Braka Poem" is a deliciously pulsing song, like a nursery rhyme – alarmingly, it deals with a filth, child-doubling age, and would certainly be banned today.

ZARSANGA: SONGS OF THE PASHTU

ZARSANGA: SONGS OF THE PASHTU (LONG DISTANCE 3660019 CD)

Pashtun can't be easy for musicians in Peshawar, on Pakistan's north west frontier. Taliban power is still considerable in the area, and anyone selling cassette cassettes could suddenly find themselves without a job. When this album was first released in 1995, Zarsanga was undisputed queen of the Peshawar awanews. Her Pashan songs move from folk to semi-classical, sung in the Pashtu language. Her attractively direct singing style, coloured by years of chain-smoking, sits across lurching percussion grooves on dholak and tabla. The album's musical value is greatly enhanced by the presence of Sultan Muhammad on rubab (short-necked Afghani lute). His bright, ringing phrases perfectly complement Zarsanga's smoky songs of love and the perils of emigration. "I will send you to your father's home while I'm gone working in Dubai/Then I can bring you back more gold and jewellery!"

HipHop

Reviewed by Hua Hsu

AUTOMATO WALK INTO THE LIGHT

ONE NEW DANCE EP/EP

Having pretty much re-invented the premise of danceable rock or dance music that caters to the strength of one single, New York production duo DFA cavalierly wove their magic wand in the general direction of HipHop. The results—for an off-kilter downtown rap group who've yet to assimilate their many influences—are surprisingly pedestrian. DFA's beat needles around with little squiggly sports of anxious guitar, a lustrous synth and the occasional handpaw, but it's neither clever nor compelling enough to sustain interest—no skank, no cerebral groove and, worst of all, no context. I mean, where have all the rap cowbells gone? At least there's a thumb piano here. Perhaps more aggressive drumming would have assimilated all the cute side effects. Jumbo from the *Unlabeled* shows up for a more traditional remix but his turn—Laurie Union Smith's "Expansions" with molasses drums—overwrites the vocal. I'll say it again: more cowbells.

BLAQ POET A MESSAGE FROM POET

Y&M RECORDS YH9303011 1

Queenbeats's Poet has been getting records out for more than 16 years—and I still consider Tyson the champ," he says angrily on "Poet Has Come." Mas once said that Poet was the one local rapper he thought should have made it, but judging by the fierceness of his old run flow, his run might not be over yet. It's fitting for the guy who dished everyone back in the day to play spoilsports again. On "A Message From Poet" he pulls the trigger on nuyor label rap beef: "All these niggas is rich, nobody want to ride. Nobody want to sit next to each other." Jay-Z and Nas get dished for being crew. Eminem gets dished for going after his own mics, Kim and Foxy get dished for being starting young clowns. It's a far more contentious victory than when he took on KRS-One for 1989's "The Massacre." On "B Side," he goes from old sage to old curmudgeon and dices intellectuals: "My shit is too deep, even for you college kids."

BRAVEHEARTS QUICK TO BACK DOWN

COLUMBIA 70067 012

When Jay-Z's most fatal flaw is his affliction for bad pop (on the game show camp of new single "Change Clothes"), at least it's still pop. Nas's weakness for beat bars has inspired such velvet backlashes that they've practically killed his career on many occasions. On paper the solo overdrives "Quick To Back Down" should be one of these failed experiments. The beat plays like a sequel to The YoungBloodz "Dams," a spray, lowering mix of disconnector sound from producer Li, who guests here. But Nas raps on this beat like he owns it, limbering "cognitive confab" raps and bringing enough attitude and confidence to carry his white sequel. Claiming to face "More drama than the

President with North Korea"), this is Nas's most topical work since his ghettoest guest verse ("I'm Nas Saddam Hussein/Sit ake, lookin' at his children's burnt remains") on Alicia Keys's "Street's On Your Mind."

CONTROLLER 7 EXPANSIONS EP

BULLY FLOOD 3

Bay Area art and peiste producer Tommy Controller did some production work for Antonio in the late 1990s and he released the sketchbookish *Left Hand's Stone* collection last year. This nice EP finds him at his meticulous best: the layering is thick and precise, the drums are crisp and there's just enough gloom to feel sad but not depressed. "Reactionary" is a lethargically subtle gem built around a weeping guitar line, drawing fists and some hypnotic taxi hooks. He starts "Shades Of A Former You" with a perfect sounding acoustic guitar sample; it manages to sound troubled yet cheerful in its simple repetition. Either of these first two sublime acts would have been fine minus the stonish drumming, but the same can't be said for the other stuff here. The powerful break and off-kilter dressing of "I Need To Speak, But Controller" give it the feeling of a demoralized brawler's anthem while "Bad Blue (Last Chance)" consists of variations of the theme of heavy duty pausing.

DIPLODOUS EPISTEMOLOGY

NO DADA BROS 1

This page has been a longtime supporter of DiploDous and its good to see his perverse blend of topped up, psych-hungry guitar get some proper distribution. The fourth part, *Epistemology* Suite opens with a crisy head guitar piece boomeranging in and he shows a rhythmic kick of trashcan handpaws and cmts. Timbaland-style spewer now is done. Game show games some walk away the mess. Elliott Smith-like strains and a looser Southern bounce beat takes over next, leading the way as the baby gurgles from Aaliyah's "Be Your Own Somebody" slip up with some chirping birds. The B side features "Summer of George Hart Vols," Diplo's summation of some unknown youth side it's moody and blissful like Shadow's "Six Day War," but Diplo takes more liberties contradicting the melody summer-bummer the singer by outliving him with a stiff, off-kilter poppy rhythm.

DI LANGUAGE NEW WAVE VS NEGROCLASH

PRIMO CD

There are all sorts of edicts: mass fleeing around nowadays but few of them are as well crafted and perfectly executed as the Language set. Language, a member of NYC's kick NegroBash posse, manages to begin with Peter Henry, make a transition to Willie Clinton, find time for DITC and Knights of the Turnbuckle and end up in deepish House without losing a thing. Digging Brown's beautiful, Latin-leaning "Nagiba" gives way to New Fresh's "Communicate," a jumpy overreager single that sounds perfect

bridging Brown's songs with a pensive Premier instrumental. DITC's "Internationally Known" seems like a funny choice until it's escorted out by the bass and then of Sir Stewards' "Miss Dag A Doo" (which then melts into the circular parents of Max Bill's "Gooch").

GHISLAIN POIRIER BEATS AS POLITICS

CHOCOLATE INDUSTRIES CH17041 CD

Stokely Carmichael once said "Everything is political." I generally find this to be true. All the adorns and decisions of one's daily life don't exist absent from politics, and the sooner you realize this the sooner we can slap you on your back and point you toward self-empowerment. But I'm not sure how any of this makes Ghislain Poirier's latest album as political as its title, sleeve graphics or sleeve graphics. The talented Canadian producer specializes in choppy, short attention span compositions just like his Chocolate cousins and there are some great moments here. "Adrenalin" consists of misanthropic loops, some stunted guitar half moves and a stammering drum kit, but it all manages to settle into a nice, thick groove. The robotic bass peaches and backwards sounds of "Gray Space" perfectly complement Dinosaur's focused, Monhe-in vocals. "It's now or a black planet/They'd rather see crack addicts." Diverse accents, before pointing out that, before you metric types people, you haven't "walked a mile in my Malabares." "Montreal Does Ma Job" is a nice, jumpy greaser that wouldn't be out of place on a Sotro record—the politics of lonely walk, perhaps?

TIMBALAND AND MAGOO INSTANT FLUTES

BLACKGROUND 314507 12

The highly anticipated new single from Timbaland opens the intersection of two genres. Annoyance #1: Indian samples, the bad has nearly run its course. While earlier entries in the HipHop exotica mix-gene were good dancefloor fare, see: Missy's "Get Your Feet On" or "I'm Nuts" "Addictive"—Timbaland's latest effort is the same slow, boring joke over and over. While an "Indian flute" coos faintly in the background and an "Indian vocal" sings the cumbersome hook, Timbaland and Magoo rap about dirty things in totally harmless ways, all leading to Annoyance #2: rappers talking to their sample. Since he can't understand the sample he's trying to use, Timbaland just struts his shoulder and smirks, "I can't understand a word you say!" It's a leathery effort and that's before Magoo—a "Queen Venera" rapper if there ever was one—gets involved. "Thanks for the props but to me you the star!" Timbaland smokes with his shucks melody. "Don't you ever forget it," his samples murder to themselves, thinking about residuals.

VARIOUS NO MORE PRISONS 2

RAFFIEMUSIC RPPV0021 CD

Imagine if this compilation actually brought an end to the prison/industrial complex—now that

would be something. The latest installment of Raffiemi's music to organize by rounds up some familiar faces (David Pez, Zion I, the Coup) and some unlikely ones (David Banner, Li Day of Group Home). Sargis's fantastic "Letter to Drums" is a song to the friends he left behind in prison and its honesty is overpowering. "I Akeba miss waah!" the yard/Galing wif y'all/Cause now I'm in New York and it's hard "I'll Get Get Get" is a bizarre posse cut that works thanks to the veteran wisdom of Edo G ("A lot of cats get scared so they head back/Thinker that they won't get paper say") "Yo Black/But they think they get rich scamm'ing" "Brow guys" and the always bludny Chubb Rock.

David Pez contributes one of their most human songs, "Behind Enemy Lines." Rather than spouting borne-passed vagaries, it's a number for the young daughter of Dr. Hampton II, a political organizer from around the way incarcerated on trumped up charges of intentional arms dealing. "Drug War" is typical Coup bombast, which is to say it's great—"Wouldn't be no dope-slangin' if McDonald's paid right." Boots offers passionately. If only it were that simple.

VARIOUS WAR (IF IT FEELS GOOD, DO IT)

HIPHOP-FLUX H156652 CD

Oakland's super-emcee HipHop Slim crew take a breather from their turntable academics for this excellent collection of political raps and libelous and renamed Presidential jockey. Stomach's "It's Up to You" is like the sad offspring of "And The Motorcycle Sped On", his touching ode to the Kennedy assassination. This time around, Slim puts together a best out of classic B-side breaks and turns a burst of classic Bush 32 wartime meters over the top. Two minutes in and it's pretty depressing, but he cleverly salvages hope by strapping together a recurrent hook—"Peace...it's up to you"—while combating Bush's beady-eyed UAW homilies with a nothrop plot from Berkeley freedom fighter Mario Sawe. Azeem posits Sally Struthers and the Peace Corps before leading a call and response of "George Bush is a gangster!" In song lyrics, Bush begs to differ: "George Bush is a Bank Manager." The diversity of moods is what keeps this anguished compilation interesting: the nervous cut and paste dialogues ("Emone Dubya Vs Osama Guedda") or Fox News Vs. The World Binoatchu") and AAM's libelous about face forecast ("In Da Club") are as funny as Qwert America's "Once Over" and D-Type's "Blood And Soil" are sad and dark. The mysterious Guzmila News Network contributes a series of cuts featuring the most surreal bursts of administration dialogue over beats. After a while it's impossible to tell the spice from the truth. On the closing cut, DJ Killbeach and Embedded DJ rap over the "Chaka Khan/Chaka Khan" bit from "I Feel For You" with "Shook and awe/Shook and awe." It's funny until the substance of those words sink in. □

Jazz & Improv

Reviewed by Andy Hamilton

JOSH ABRAMS CIPHER

DELMARK 03446 CD

Delmark is known as a jazz label but now covers all areas of the fluid Chicago scene. It's hard to think of an improv release that covers more stylistic ground—or more thoughtfully and beautifully—than Josh Abrams' latest. The bestest of Steaks And Stones and Town And Country here teams up with Berlin free jazz trumpeter Al Dörner, Argentine altoist and clarinetist Guillermo Gregorio and Jeff Parker on guitar. The lack of drums gives an open rhythmic feel. "And So" is textual exploration, verging on sound art for trumpet and sax, whose sustained tones cause pronounced beating. Dörner creates a squall with his freely guided white noise on "Cipher." "No Theory" is a spiky free improv while "Web Nihil Net" turns into a tender ballad. It's surprising how many free players acknowledge the Italiano Code School, and here Gregorio references Lee Konitz's work with guitarist Bill Bauer, especially on the beautiful last track, "For SK."

FRED ANDERSON BACK AT THE VELVET LOUNGE

DELMARK 03448 CD

The 74-year-old slayer of free jazz terror, live at his house—Anderson has managed the Velvet Lounge for more than 20 years, making it the premier venue of its kind in Chicago. This release is a follow-up to the trio album on the live, although only Teddo Ake remains, sharing the bass chair with Harrison Bankhead. Maunio Ben features on trumpet, with Jeff Parker on guitar and Chad Taylor on drums. Grooves are swirling rather than free, and the saxophonist's rich, long-sequenced, woody tone is surprisingly reminiscent of Sonny Rollins—listen to the unaccompanied opening to the ballad "Olivia." But the music is even less than challenging. In a must, Bankhead contributes colorful bass on the downhome "Joe Maniac Blues." While Anderson displays formidable energy over the charming rock riff of "Ying Fatt."

CONNIE BAUER HUMMELSUMMEN

INTACT 085 CD

This is trombonist Bauer's fifth solo disc. He's a free improviser of wide sympathies, never dry and abstract, always warm and melodic; his command of multiphonics, lip flutzing and other extended techniques is never merely virtuosic; as John Corbett writes, each piece has a "dorjine." The trombonist's rich, fruity tone combines with a spacious acoustic to create a memorable sonic experience.

STEVE COLEMAN & FIVE ELEMENTS ON THE RISING OF THE 64 PATHS

WORLD ON WIND 03455 CD

Used to find Steve Coleman's playing pattern bland and odd, but maybe I'm stupid, because his Label Blue release is very enjoyable. With former bass player Reggie Washington replacing an acoustic bass and more recent

partner Anthony Tidd guitar-like on electric bass, Coleman adds Malik Moazzon on flute and Jonathan Finlayson on trumpet. The result is less funky and electronic than M-Base, looser and more expansive, with a range of original compositions from the euphoric "Must And Counterpoint" to the dirge-like "The Movement In Self." Yet, the titles are pretentious and like many who hit out on a successful formula, Coleman tends to stick to it; but the album is rewarding nonetheless.

DOMINIC DUVAL & MARK WHITEHEAD RULES OF ENGAGEMENT VOL. 1

DRUMUP 0303430 CD

Basist Duval is astonishingly productive in the studio, yet there's never a hint of the routine or mechanical in these beautifully paced duets, with Mark Whitehead an impassioned collaborator on clarinet, soprano and alto saxes. At between three and eight minutes, the right tracks—including a solo state to finish—make for finely judged improvised statements. In addition to Duval's compositions, there's a version of "Over The Rainbow"—"Rainbows Were Over"—which writer Dan Warburton rightly compares to the "televisual" of standards by Joe McPhee's Trio X, featuring Duval.

CHARLES EUBANKS BIRDS OF BAGHDAD

OMP 290 CD

Charles Eubanks is brother of the better known Kevin (guitar) and Robin (trombone). After an impressive start with Dewey Redman's Quartet in the 1980s, his appearances on the scene were intermittent. But a recent flurry of activity has followed his first release as leader in 2001 at the age of 53, *New Beginnings* on OMP. After solo and two recordings on Working Factory, comes this set of original and jazz standards. Eubanks is a thoughtful, reflective improviser, though maybe he's better in a duo setting, since he's not the kind of two-handed panther with a rock solid inner tempo that can make a solo really come off. But his interpretation of Monk's devilishly difficult "Thinkin' Train," for instance, is witty, complex and delightful. Originals are mostly more abstract, though "Roadmap To Swing" is a straightforward blues.

HAT MELTER "UNKNOWN ALBUM"

CRUICRAFT 0201P CDLP

The Quotient label confides that "it weeps with joy over this new release" featuring Steve Hess, percussion, Jeff Klatt, cello, Jon Mueller, percussion; and Matt Turner, cello. Hess and Mueller are Chicago area players—Mueller studied with Hal Russell in the early 90s—while Turner has worked with Marilyn Crispell, Joseph Jarman and Mary McLeod. Consisting of two LP-side-length tracks (each unnamed), "Unknown Album" focuses the interaction of free improv and sound art, with some detours deployed sparsely in reductionist fashion. Obscure, elusive and engaging, Hat Melter affords joy, as if not quite tears of joy, from this listener.

MICHAEL KANAN THE GENTLEMAN IS A DOPE

MESH AROUND NEW TALENT 031414 CD

Like most players affiliated to the Cool School, pianist Michael Kanan is an intense, spontaneous improviser who is under-recorded and too little appreciated. On this album with Tim Pleasants and Ben Street, he explores unusual standards and his own original compositions. The disc opens with "Tostitos," a characteristically by Lee Konitz, and includes the hauntingly beautiful "Ghost Of Yesterday" by Arthur Heger, sung by Billie Holiday. An expansive interpretation of Monk's single note theme, "Inebriolous," closes the disc. Kanan's laid, relaxed lines have crystal clarity, beautifully soiled by his partners.

KELLY MEASHEY & DYLAN TAYLOR SONGS OF LIVING

OMP 275 CD

Though the Beatles tried to do it *A Hard Day's Night*, it's not often you hear a jazz version of Beatleboon's *Old Joe*. But then it's also unusual to hear jazz standards on the OMP label; this is singer Kelly Meashey's debut as a leader, though she's been active since the early 80s, and accompanied by bassist Dylan Taylor, she performs with abandon, scattering exuberantly on "Straighten Up And Fly Right," and with raw passion on the bassist's own "Viviane." But her sassy emotional approach threatens to go over the top.

TED NASH STILL EVOLVED

PALMETTO FM2048 CD

Previous releases by LA tenorist Ted Nash hadn't quite prepared me for this splendid album. The superb programme of his own originals are suffused with blues feeling; the arrangements both funky and exploratory; Nash's former boss Wynton Marsalis pumps on some tracks, and his opening solo is swaggering, theatrical and resolute with the most amazing vocalized effects—the freest playing I've heard from him in years. On other tracks, trumpeter Marcus Privitt attempts to outbid Marsalis's vocalizing, while Frank Kimbrough tries bravely with the blues form on "Jump Start."

O'KEEFE/STANYEK/WALTON/ WHITEHEAD TUNNEL

CRUICRAFT 0201P CD

This quartet's beautiful band of chamber improv deserves its quirky endorsement from Wadada Leo Smith, who describes the "lyrical/expressive designed sonic fields that are constructed with a continuous evolving music." This is live improv with some editing in post-production. It says here, and the focus is total not melodic. "There is a most Edmannequin, and Jason Stanyek, almost an electric freedom and quarter-note guitar, is the major note maker, though on "Draft" other players also take a less restrained role. A richly rewarding disc that repays repeated listening.

ENRICO PIERANUNZI FELLINIUNZI

CHAMAZZ 0345155 CD

Following on from the Marziano project, a non-permanent group of Kenny Wheeler, Eric Pattee, Charles Haden and Paul Motian join Italian pianist Pieranunzi in a programme of compositions, mostly by Nino Rota, for the films of Federico Fellini. Pieranunzi made the arrangements for such classics as *La Dolce Vita*, *La Strada*, *Il Bidone* and *La Notte Di Cabiria*, and added a couple of his own plangent originals "Americo," an authentically jazz interpretation of the tango, and Pieranunzi's waltz time "Calabria Dream" with a gorgeous Kenny Wheeler solo, as highlights of some highly lyrical invention.

PAOLO SORGE TRINKLE TRIO

AUMED AU0033 CD

This unusual release from the small label from Puglia in southern Italy features Sorge on guitar and electronics, Michel Godard on tuba, and Francesco Cassa on drums and percussion. "Trinkle Trio" takes its name from Italo Calvino's "Trinkle Trio," which features here together with other work compositions and originals. The French tuba player is a frequent collaborator with Italian groups such as the Instabile Orchestra and here reverses expectations.

KEN VANDERMARK/ FREE FALL FURNACE

WOLFFLY RAL WO0013 CD

Furnace is the album, Free Fall the group—named in honour of Jimmy Guffee's classic of early 80s free jazz featuring Paul Blei and Steve Swallow. Ken Vandermark on 8 Ball and bass control the music on the instrumental free-up—well, almost free—on piano and fingering Hubert Flaten on bass—and the combination of pulsed and free tempos. But as you'd expect from this brilliant cheerleader of avant music, this is as cerebral, tedious. Guffee expressed what he called "soft jazz," and both Vandermark and Wik are harder-edged and less oblique—though who could be as oblique as Paul Blei? This is especially true in uptempo numbers like "Hapocrit," in contrast to reflective improvisations like "The Spell Of Introspection." It's good to see Guffee's remarkable legacy still being explored, especially as the man himself is, sadly, very ill with Parkinson's disease.

MIROSLAV VITOUS UNIVERSAL SYNCOPATIONS

ECM 0305032 CD

An ECM supergroup, with Jan Garbarek, Chick Corea, John McLaughlin and Jack DeJohnette, plus an added brass section on three tracks. These musicians have played together in various combinations since the bassist's 1968 debut as leader, *Inner Search*, and as the leader's group is more than the sum of its parts. The leader's compositions are excellent, from the plangent "Sunbow Foresta" to "Strong Blues," which features some of Garbarek's finestest playing. □

Outer Limits

Reviewed by Jim Haynes

RICHARD CHARTIER ARCHIVAL 1991 CHRONUS 60 CD

Listening through headphones is the only way one can appreciate — or even hear — the subtleties of Richard Chartier's current body of work. This self-contained, highly mediated headscape effectively removes the listener from the control of the real, and allows Chartier free access to new toy plastic sounds around in an ultra quiet form of minimalism. Despite (or possibly because of) those constraints, he often succeeds in his poetry of the micro-fragment and *Archival 1991* was comes an aesthetic of control in a situation of his earlier industrially triggered dronescapes. The attractive and expansive tapestry of sound morphs into an undeniably pervasive embrace that reflects the aesthetics of early 90s contemporaries such as Lustmord, Schizo Tech, and PGR. The control mechanisms of *Archival 1991* take root in the shadowy metaphors that reflect a gloom of the sublime.

JOE COLLEY DESPERATE ATTEMPTS AT BEAUTY AUSCULTURE AUS690 CD

"Show us how weak you are, empty yourself as you find the lesson in this disorder nothing, nothing nothing but building mountains to future failures," reads the glass white text on the matt white paper housing Joe Colley's latest production. Couple that bout of misanthropy with the furthest antagonistic blast of noise that introduces this album, and Desperate Attempts At Beauty reads as a scathing irony of self-loathing and existential frustration. Colley's inquisitive research into cheap electronics and sound itself often betrays his angst, as three of these "desperate attempts" are direct contact microphone recordings of his sniffling and dry sobbing over a reflective observation, they are compelling, with all their percolating details and scurrying textures. While their connections to the realm of beauty may be questionable, Colley contextualizes these sounds not to profoundly ugly electric field disturbances, painfully loud digital explosions, and gut-churning low frequencies, rather than pursuing beauty through his work. Colley gleefully subverts its potential at every turn.

THE DEAD C THE DAMNED STRAIGHT FURNITURE CO 21 CD

For 17 years, The Dead C have been close to dying when calling themselves a rock group, for the frayed threads that connect them to blues-based structures are always on the verge of snapping. If it were up to guitarist Bruce Russell — as admitted non-musician — the group might freestyle into pure noise improvisation; but it's not, as Michael Morley injects his humming vane and rumbling and refined, post-VU guitar strain into amplified, primitive rock songs. The myriad capriciousness in these counterparts, particularly through peripatetic Robin Wyatt's skills between agile free jazz stumble and demonstrative rock stomps. The album's

opener "Truth" is a thud rock mantra with discordant shards of feedback nestled into a simple ramp for arched guitar chords and a huge backbeat. The album fluctuates through extended periods of disintegration into textured noise before coalescing back into the subtle, Morley-led tunes. Nobody does this better than The Dead C.

DIELECTRIC DRONE ALL-STARS DR ONE DIELECTRIC DRONE 50CD

Basefall is an acronym for Dielectric label boss Drew "Drifter" Webster. In his Dielectric Drone All-Stars, that obsession is fulfilled as a series of fantasy league improv sessions, where he invites a handful of musicians from his native SF Bay Area into his studio with the simple instruction: "Drone on, men and women!" Webster then extracts monumental crescendos and rich timbral textures from Karen Stables' guitar, Bill Neerling's double bass, Garth Mappert's accordion, Tony Cross's violin. Ben Haynes's digimod and electric tones courtesy of Webster in his guise as Dielectro. The resulting aural masses reflect the saturated atmosphere from Robert Rytman's steel cellos and Harry Bernstein's sound sculptures. Webster confers to his Dielectro. The women donning Black Metal corpse paint and bullet belts, and there's an ominous sensibility lurking behind these recordings, particularly in the majestic yet break down between his dancing trains and Stoicpole's monstrous gong tones.

LEIF ELGGREN VIRULENT IMAGES/VIRULENT SOUND FIREKING EDITION FIREK 044 CD

Virulent images/virulent sound is a curious entry, even for Swedish conceptual artist Leif Elggren. At the center of this piece is the quasi-scientific — but highly dubious — hypothesis that viral infections can be transmitted by sight. In other words, Elggren wants you to believe that upon gazing at an image of the Ebola virus, "an epidemic would ensue, kicking off a galloping Apocalypse worse than the most horrible or horrific viruses that man has worked so hard to create!" Elggren then posts the equally mysterious: what about listening to a virus? While never directly citing the event, his dry study into pandemic mimics much of the wild speculation that swarmed around the anthrax scares in the Washington DC area right after 11 September 2001. He makes mass hysteria appear seductive by reproducing a number of strikingly beautiful images of viruses — including HIV, rabies, influenza and smallpox — and by composing a nearly empty recording of the fibrillations and very distant, static tones which, he claims, are micro-recordings of viruses. It might be closer to a one liner than most of his work, but Virulent Images/Virulent Sound does pose questions of how an audience perceives information and how that perception carries tremendous power.

IRR. APP. (EXT.) DUST PINCHER APPLIANCES CRUCIATION 21 CD

Mark Waldron, the humble genius behind irr. app. (ext.), originally produced the first half of *Dust Pincher Appliances* through Signifier Best. Signifier's now defunct label Something Weird back in 1996, and mentions in the sleeve notes that he has been "waiting patiently since then". Unfortunately, luck has not been on his side: the bulk of his catalogue has been on hold, as one of the labels distributing him died and others have encountered problems with funding. Like a Name With Wound recording, *Dust Pincher Appliances* is as much an eclectic reading from a personal mythology as it is a manifestation of surrealism through sound. Here, Waldron constructs a tower — if completed — premise where dust holds an intellect to prescribe a new set of laws and belief systems that focus its own perspective on how the world operates. *Dust Pincher Appliances* is something of a soundbook for the absurdist concept, whereupon the dust notes drift aimlessly through weeding dunes haunted by dust ghosts, only to be interrupted by curious vibrations from broken music boxes, carnival stalls, and granular explosions. Waldron's vision is so completely removed that empathy, politics, and justice are snafu from every twist to the blame tale.

LOVELY MIDGET NORTH HEAD FAMILY VIEWED FV04 CD

Rachel Scheerer is a veteran of New Zealand's Xposcopy cassette culture, where she performed in Angelhead with Michael Morley (Gate, Dead C, etc) and in the blazey all-woman avant folk group Queen Meenie Puss. Since 1995, she has sporadically recorded as Lovely Midget, with one EP on Ecstasy House and a disc on Cosmic Hermesland recording North Head. Given the eponymous, inevitably low and misty stream of AC Ro from the likes of Billiecoet Star Metal or Vibrocorinthian Orchestra, Scheerer's music emerges as far more precise, intimate and personal purely by dint of her paucity of production, even as there's a decided similarity in their collective paucity of rural drone obfuscations. Even less structured than her previous freefloating recordings, North Head soaks with the consistency of cold black mud. Anguile virtues further bind gray electronics anguilliform as an ensemble in crafting a 10-11 lyric chronic piece. Muffled nuances vibrate sinuously as if slurry rivers scoured heavy furniture in the apartment apertures. However, the bulk of this album is housed in a marly ambience of non-placed memories and nostalgia for things forgotten. Scheerer's source material is all but disappear in this beautifully rendered smear of fragmented sound.

MEM IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR AUSCULTURE 116 CD

Joseph Lanza's 1996 book Elevator Music offers a benevolent history of the machinations of Music Central to his appraisals and arguments is the

idea that the advent of modernity created a necessity within the population at large for some form of mood music. The Music Corporation simply filled that empty market with a commodity band, fewed common denominator material. That is not to say that the subcultures of the world do not share this same need. Regardless of their own intentions, minimalists, post-minimalists, and Ambient artists might find their work serving this need for mood music. Consciously or not, *It Was A Very Good Year* by Polish drone/crusher Mem (Kamil Antosiewicz) draws attention to this potential gap between an artist's intent and the audience's use. Mem has stretched the machine room from Frank Sinatra's rendition of "It Was A Very Good Year" into a frozen drone that adapts reflects the pliancy of Kama Tachere as well as the scalped infamy of Charlemagne Palestine.

KIYOHI MIZUTANI & DANIEL MENCHE GARDEN AUSCULTURE AUS690 CD

Kiyohi Mizutani's collaboration with US noise veteran Daniel Menche offers a slight detour from Mizutani's recent body of work documenting delicate manipulations of environmental recordings. Splitting the Mizutani along frequency bandwidth, the Japanese artist handled all of the high and midrange frequencies, and Menche took on the low end from the same source material — Mizutani's field recording of a chorus of Japanese crickets and locusts. Initially, the organic quality of these insects is left alone, as the amassed clappings ebb and flow across the stereo field in an unpredictable fashion. Yet Mizutani and Menche slowly manipulate these sounds into a mechanical language, by looping choral elements into repeated phrases, then accumulating an ominous pulse underneath and finally by digitally filtering the sound down to their raw tonalities. The simple shift in the very sound is to be perceived — as organic first, mechanical second — makes *Garden* a marvelous piece of work.

RHY YAU COAGULATION: SELECTED WORKS 1998-2000 AUSCULTURE AUS690 CD

Some people can gaze back on their collage days with nostalgia for drunken parties, dumb stunts and sexual experimentation, satisfied that most details are lost to memory in stomach churning fashion. RHY YAU reconstitutes the now absent moments from his tenure at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo as violent sound poetry/noise constructions. Halfway through the middle of these processed streams and aggressive explosions, YAU offers an "Intermission," where he shows his hand down his throat and vents, again and again. For YAU, his own body is not just the vehicle that twiddles knobs and stomps on distortion pedals, it's also the aile where sound manifests itself as a physical force. Bracketing concrete body sounds with pronounced silences accentuates the proprioceptive. Like the Sensi associates Schimpfkuhl, YAU's work tips the most nightmarish elements from the depths of the id and splatters them across a soundscape. □

Print Run

New music books: devoured, dissected, dissed



Let freedom ring: Joe Harriott

JOE HARRIOTT: FIRE IN HIS SOUL ALAN ROBERTSON NORTHWAY Pbk £11.99 BY BEN WATSON

Joe Harriott was the most vital saxophonist to emerge from the British scene of the 1950s and 60s. His "beautiful cutting tone" (as fellow saxophonist Ken Blaxter put it) still catches the breath. When you first hear him, the immediate comparison is Charlie Parker. That's not because Harriott copied him, it's because he sounds like him, that bewitching, that addictive. Rather than strung along in obedience to the band changes, notes seem to boil up from inside him. Harriott was driven by the same demon: to broadly accept that the passions of the subaltern be recognised as the secret dynamo of modern art. His music was aggressively intelligent about harmony and time, but his playing was extraordinarily poignant, vocal and vulnerable too. Harriott found the musical Holy Grail, the screen between intellect and emotion ditched as a delusion.

Born in Jamaica in 1928, Harriott was, like most of the musically gifted of his ilk, blue heart and reggae, educated at the Alpha Boys' School for orphans in Kingston. He emigrated to Britain aged 22, and died in a Southampton hospital of spinal cancer in 1973. Harriott's

concept of avant garde music – he called it "free improvisation" in Melody Maker in 1965 – never received the attention granted John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman and Albert Ayler. The crucial LPs were *Free Form* (Jazzland 1960), *Abstract* (Columbia 1962) and *Movement* (Columbia 1963). Harvey Pekar of *Down Beat* awarded *Abstract* five stars, the first British jazz release to receive that accolade. Unfortunately, critical recognition in the US did not translate into money and fame in the UK. After a spell playing in John Mayer's ahead of time Indo-Jazz Fusion, Harriott lost his way "towards the end, he was reduced to begging for a line with local jazz groups. Intensely loyal supporters were unable to make him a star, racism and cultural imperialism took their toll. The music he played, though, was completely compelling, if also unfinished – at least, for us. We still don't quite know what to make of it."

This is the first biography of Joe Harriott. This sits high above the genre of biography which is every Radio 4 presenter's excuse for a literary exersize and every middlebrow reader's opportunity to assume grasp rather than experience art or think politics. The text, in contrast, is fighting fresh, direct, necessary. Born in 1951, Alan Robertson is too young to have seen Harriott in person but he knows about jazz in Britain today. He sensed something was

missing, and decided to investigate its history. Numerous interviews with those who knew Harriott, plus citations from contemporary reviews, reveal a jazz scene before it was shattered by the commercial explosion of rock and the aesthetic schism of free improvisation. Interviewed musicians knew what they were talking about, critics' reviews made sense. Robertson has done heroic amounts of research, using chronology to organise his data. The spiky and unpretentious attitude of working musicians shines through, providing a stream of canny observations about people and situations.

The British jazz establishment reckoned Joe Harriott's pursuit of musical freedom was dangerous. Although he was acknowledged as the scene's most brilliant soloist, and his classic quintet (Shake Keane on trumpet, Pat Smythe on piano, Colorado Goodie on bass, Phil Seamen on drums) wooed audiences with their free playing, freedom threatened the evidence of mastery demanded by jazz as showbiz (the inevitable "but can you draw?"). British jazz followed up its lurch by refusing to grant the free players who followed Harriott any recognition whatsoever. This split – a typical case of a fight breaking out on a sinking ship, since all the audience money went to rock anyway – leaves its mark on Robertson's book. Harriott's freedom work is seen as the

absolute horse of musical experiment, whereas if free improvisation were taken into account, it would appear as a link in a chain. Play Abstract next to Tony Oxley's *The Baptised Traveler* (Columbia 1969) and all becomes clear: this is what could be played if the implications of what pianist Bill Evans did with Scott LaFaro and Paul Motian were followed through. In 1988, Courtney Pine's *Jazz Warriors* toured Britain with a tribute to Harriott, a slightly ludicrous gambit as none of Harriott's records were then available. Pine reduced Harriott's concept of collective abstraction, derived from painting (in 1971 Harriott was planning an album called *Colours*), to the bare notion of "musical solvent" (plus some unexplained chaos). If *The Jazz Warriors* had actually grasped Harriott's intent, the apex of black British jazz wouldn't be Courtney Pine's beguiling (but slightly unepic) MOR soul.

Musical facts dictate that interest in Harriott among serious musicians will continue to grow. In such a demure, perhaps Claude Deppa and Orphy Robinson and Gary Geary will get their act together and (following Pat Thomas) acknowledge what Cecil Taylor and Tony Oxley do to jazz rhythm. The answer to the current stand-off between authentic groove and authentic improvisation is lying all around us like trails of gunpowder. Robertson's book is a flashlight: it could help us find the matches. □



Henky Tonk images by Henry Horenstein, including (right) Wayne Jennings

HONKY TONK HENRY HORENSTEIN

CHRONICLE BOOKS PER \$54.95

BY EDWARD

Interrogating music about its social function differs from asking about the nature of its audience. The bare fact of sitting in a room listening involves the audience members, but the situation does not necessarily mean that the music is fulfilling its social function. I can listen to a minute without knowing how to listen, listen to a morning rag in the evening, or a peyote session while sober and, because we live in a time of mechanical reproduction, the abstract essence of the music is divorced from its social function.

Looking at Henry Horenstein's remarkable photographs of Country music performers and their fans in his book *Honky Tonk* started me thinking about this again. This selection of

photos dates mostly from the 1970s, when Horenstein documented this material in Nashville and various musical venues in New England, where he grew up. Some of them were shot at album covers for Rounder Records — then just starting out — but he grabbed the majority for his own enjoyment. Of the few performers in these pictures still alive and working today, most are invisible to the current Country audience. That fact, however, is just a symptom of the huge change that has come over popular music since these photos were shot.

A few months ago I was sent a screener of the forthcoming *Live Zappa* DVD set and was curious as to what it would look like on my computer screen. By the end of the first number I ejected it and tossed the disc away. I realized that I had found myself so repelled by the prying, goggle image of Robert Plant that I hadn't taken in anything of the music itself. This



attitude of the goggle performer mistaking the supplicant entertainment consumers is the antithesis of the relationship between performers and fans in Horenstein's photos. It was also one of the things punk reacted to, which perhaps explains the affinity between punk rioters and classic Country music in the US.

The faces in these photos are people who are used to being photographed and, in fact, who expect it, although mostly with cheap cameras rather than Horenstein's Rolleiflex and Leicas. Carol and Pearl Slicker had a little gap between them as her parents snip away. Ernest Tubb is seen wading into a crowd of fans after a show, pen ready to sign anything thrust his way, a big open grin on his face, and in another shot he's invisible as a mob descends on his bus.

These are other remarkable shots of fans' weathered yet optimistic faces (when not passed-out drunk), of people who are clearly proud of

their role in the agency of Country freedom and aware of their own importance. The energy of their enthusiasm scarred the walls of the famous bar Tubb's Oedipal Lounge — across an alley from the original Grand Ole Opry — with graffiti on every flat surface (including the mysterious and large inscription, TULLSTOR, across an old photo of Ray Scott), the same energy that informs the posters of Tubb's and her workmates.

Most of the performers here were already marginal when Horenstein shot them and I'd wager that virtually none of the fans pictured here who are still alive belong to today's version of Country music. Henry Horenstein has caught an era of vital social interaction around a minority interest popular music in honest black and white, and if you consume or produce music, it might be worthwhile to look at these pictures and ask yourself some hard questions about your relationship to your audience. □

IMPROVISED MUSIC FROM JAPAN EXTRA 2003

YOSHIIYUKI SUZUKI (EDITOR)

IMPROVISED MUSIC FROM JAPAN \$10.99

PER • C D

BY SUE BELL

"That kind of performance, where the players and the audience just go with the feeling and think that whatever happens is fine — lately I've started to think it's unhealthy... I want to be making something solid in a situation that's like pop at home, where there's nowhere to escape." This is from an interview with Kazumi Nemba and, like me, you love to hear experimental musicians say things like this; there's plenty to enjoy in this special edition of *Improvvised Music From Japan's annual*. Nemba says he was "stunned" by the "extreme discipline" of guitarist Iku Sugimoto in performance. Nemba is 25 years old and runs the online record shop, Ottensson. His contribution to the accompanying CDs is an intense drone, as darkly rich as a slab of chocolate cake, around which tinkling and harmonica can rot and rotote. Very odd, very satisfying.

Improvvised Music From Japan was started by Yoshiyuki Suzuki in 1996 as a Website

(www.japanimprov.com). Two years ago Suzuki added a record label and, in 2002, an annual magazine, all with the same name — he admits it's unwieldy, but you know what you're getting. Issue 2 is scheduled for February 2004. In the meantime, Suzuki has produced an "Extra" issue, focusing on "Improv's New Waves", is the latest generation of Japanese musicians. Most of the work on this theme has been done by critic/musicon Toshio Omi, who has interviewed ten or so of the key people. In a lengthy, head-scratching introductory essay, Omi identifies the most influential of the earlier generation: Ohno, Sugimoto, Sakabe, Mi, and some major festivals which brought Hans Reichel, Martin Fricourt, Jon Rose, Jim O'Rourke and others to Japan in the late 90s. Musicians like Amy Yoshida, Taku Umami and DJ Peaky became active performers around this time. An even younger group (Ikumi Toki, Ju Murakami, nertegle) started up around 2000.

What the magazine makes abundantly clear is the sheer eclecticism of experimental activity, not only in Tokyo but all over Japan. Several of these musicians run their own labels: Taku Umami has Hiban Music, Tetsuya Yasunaga (from Quantal) Minato, who plays something I might call Serenity Improv has Cubic Music, and the multi-

named cam-jays has the prolific Commu re-Disc. The magazine takes to them all, and then offers overviews of each label, with brief glimpses at a whole slew of records. Many of these mini-reviews are playfully suggestive: "I couldn't help but picture party time on a sunken submarine", writes Masamitsu Kawai of Clock by On.

Other interviews include Buafatch (duo of poet-Christian Marjory Dill, Ami Yoshida [composer of extreme vocal sounds]), Asana (determined to blur the various meanings of "organ"), Kazumi Yamuchi (soloist in a far west Japan improvising on who sees), and fine jazz drummer and regular Peter Brötzmann's spinning partner, Shoji Hano. Reviews of 50 CDs complete the text.

As with the launch issue of the magazine, the tone is thoughtful, slightly formal and remarkably free of gurning. Humour pops up whenever Toshimaru Nakamura (no-input mixing board) appears, and its ironic pointing with Taku Akiyama about their Meeting At Off Site concert series expresses well the friendly relationships that underpin a scene like this.

As for the pair of CDs, there's an ebullient nodder from Buafatch and free jazz from Shoji Hano with Masaharu Shiho (see). Nertegle

explores the stress points of CDU machines and Tokuma Iku does the same to four-track recorders. Kazushige Kinoshita (violin), Masamitsu Enki (trumpet), Masahide Iokunaga (alto) and Taku Umami (bass) all contribute solos that show how conventional instruments are played differently in the age of Electronics. For me, the best surprises come from DJ Peaky — get a vacuum cleaner, feedback, beerbeats: let's rock the guitar! Ju Murakami and Dill (DJ Inoue). Dill's "9 Minutes" recalls the UK's Four bit, warm, chopped-up samples of cello and piano, and a good vocal. This is a pop song which brings strange company.

Listening to Hano's drumming — an Improv work from an earlier age — underlines how much has changed. Electronics have divorced physical activity from musical result. Physical display and scatergun energy are out — urbanisation, awareness of silence and machine abuse are in. Beauty, long burnings, has a foot in the door (Mitsunori, Dill). Among young musicians it's like everything is up for grabs all over again. Suzuki and Omi have done a fine job of letting us see just how much is going on below the surface in Japan. □

Cross Platform

Sound in other media. This month: Film maker Cameron Jamie tells Edwin Pouncey about his obsession with monsters and why The Melvins' drone rock makes the perfect soundtrack



December spawned a monster: Cameron Jamie (left) and stills from *Kranky Klaus* (middle) and *Spook House* (right)

In the dark and disturbing cinematic underworld of Los Angeles born fine artist and film maker Cameron Jamie, anything can (and does) happen. In November he embarked on an ambitious UK tour with three of his films accompanied by local LA rock outfit The Melvins playing a live soundtrack. The event was sponsored by UK art producers Artangel, who commissioned Jamie to complete his *Kranky Klaus* and *Spook House* films, to which he would add his early silent documentary about teenage backyard wrestling, *BB*.

"The first film I worked with The Melvins on was *BB*," he explains when asked about his choice of musicians to accompany the triple bill. "When I saw them perform their drone act in a small club during the early 90s I was really impressed by it. They planted the seed for that whole Metal drone movement and were the band that deconstructed elements of punk rock, Heavy Metal and rock 'n' roll and really played with it. They're essentially rock minimalists."

The Melvins' rock minimalism proved to be the perfect foil for Jamie's subterranean, what deals with seemingly ordinary people taking on the personas of monsters (*Spook House*), hairy goat-horned demons (*Kranky Klaus*), or professional wrestlers (*BB*). The group's droning and tightly amplified sonic abstractions drive these films along, giving an even more intense edge of uneasiness to the proceedings. *BB* may be just a grimy glimpse inside the world of teenage pro-wrestling (make believe, but when added to The Melvins' massive version of Flipse's "Hung Bunny, Roman Dog Bird, Sacrifice" from their failed *Lysof album*, the full body slam of Jamie's unsettling urban vision comes crashing down).

"It's about role play and creating something really serious out of junk," he reveals when talking about the circumstances behind *BB*, "like going into a local dumpster and building a wrestling ring out of garbage. There's a lot of piss and a drive to express something happening there. It's also a form of social theatre in that they are depicting the horror and violence that we fear in society."

The more traditional elements of horror and fear nar

up in Jamie's *Spook House* and *Kranky Klaus*. The former was shot on location in Detroit where, as in other states of America, the Halloween season is played out with a vengeance as residents transform their homes into haunted mansions and publicly air the dark side of their personalities. According to Jamie, this evolved from the late 50s and early 60s when pre-slasher horror movie movies were being screened on late night TV, and baby boomers were secretly reading Forrest J Ackerman's *Famous Monsters Of Filmland* magazine.

"When you're a kid you want to convert your bedroom into a torture chamber, make the front lawn into a graveyard and have a fake mad laboratory in the back garden," he laughs. "I think it's a tradition of folk theatre, but it's also coming out of what people see in popular culture. The way someone would hear a rock band and say, 'Wow! I want to do that'. A lot of my social documentary work touches on how people become inspired by popular media, but to the extent that they somehow become damaged by it."

Kranky Klaus also deals with monsters and tradition, together with an element of wrestling, as horned creatures (called Krampus) run rampant around the small Austrian mountain village of Bad Gastein, looking for suitable victims to physically attack as punishment for whoever sins they may have committed during the past year. Celebrated every December 5 throughout the region, the Halloween, "Krampus Day" is another ancient satirical tradition that fascinates Jamie.

"The dances and even the way they beat people up are very true to the original Krampus tradition," he informs. "There's a whole routine about pulling someone down. This body language, when combined with the sound of the bells they are wearing, can put you into a hypnotic state where you can't fight back or do anything. I was both terrified and moved when I first saw it."

For both films Jamie used the sounds he recorded through the microphone on his camera. *Spook House* is an improvised piece with The Melvins adding their combined rock drone to the assembled field recordings. "It has several sections to it which

eventually build up into a kind of frenzy."

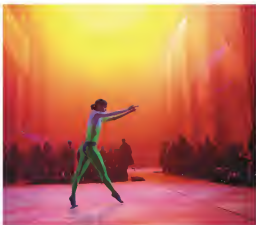
On *Kranky Klaus*, however, it was this hallucinatory sound of the bells on the creature's backs (made from two World War Two helmets that have been welded together) that formed the foundation of the composition he asked the group to come up with. "When you have six pairs of these bells resonating through the Alps you get these incredible sounds, and so I decided to keep the bells going throughout the whole film. I didn't have to manipulate the sound or anything, they were just there throughout the whole shoot. Then I had The Melvins build an epic drone around these sounds."

The resulting mix of stoner Metal guitar explosion, crowd procession power and Jamie's recordings of demonic bells gives the piece a feel that belongs more to 20th century electronic music than rock 'n' roll. This attitude to recorded sound is something that Jamie has always found attractive and instructive.

"The earliest records I bought were Halloween sound effects albums," he claims, "which you would play outside or inside of your house during the Halloween season. I also used to love playing sound effects records as one piece, it was really like musique concrète. So hearing something like John Cage's *Fontana Mix* made perfect sense to me. Listening to sound effects records was how I got into avant garde music."

One film project that was sadly never realised was *Bubblegum*, where the young film maker had planned to work on a soundtrack with Sun Ra.

"It was going to be a cross between Ray Harryhausen and Luis Buñuel," he sighs somewhat nostalgically. "I told Sun Ra that I really wanted him to do the soundtrack and he agreed to do it. He was dead serious about doing something, to the point that whenever we would meet he would ask me about the film. He was into the idea of making film music and, apart from *Spook House*, *The Place*, nobody had approached him to do anything." □ For information about the films of Cameron Jamie go to www.artangel.org.uk. The Melvins' 26 Songs is out now on *Isaac*



Left: Merce Cunningham Dance Company at Tate Modern. Right: Matmos's skeleton crew at Yerba Buena Center

MERCE CUNNINGHAM DANCE COMPANY LONDON TATE MODERN UK

BY CLIVE BELL

"Not so much an evening of dances, as the experience of dance", promises the programme for Merce Cunningham's Anniversary Events at the Tate Modern, marking the company's 50th anniversary. The Tate's Tatarine Hall is a colossal space, featuring a hefty background hum, but surely it has never looked better than this before a performance. All colours have been loaned out into a shimmering, ochre monochrome by the vast yellow sun of *The Weather Project*, the current installation by Icelandic/Danish artist Olafur Eliasson. This colour filtering has the effect of making the 500 strong audience look uniformly fantastic, as if we are entering *The Matrix*. Moreover, the whole ceiling consists of reflective mirrors, and several of the audience watch the whole performance in reflection, lying supine. And, in a weirdly theatrical coup, the only way we can see the three musicians is upside and reflected upside down on the ceiling.

The musicians have the opening ten minutes to themselves: Ikuehisa Kuugi, Christian Wolff and percussionist William Winant are jointly credited as composers of music that is presumably largely improvised. As usual with Cunningham, music is not specifically tailored to the dance, yet it fits like a glove, simply because everyone is speaking an agreed performance language. Piano, violin, electronics and metallic percussion prowls the space, achieving a nice balance between coolness and energy. The same goes for the dance, though

Cunningham employs stiffness less than the musicians employ silence. With Cunningham you always get a lot of dance, poised, witty, earthy at times, but always running swiftly on to the next thing.

The 15 dances arrive suddenly in a long line and file out to three performing areas, joined by pathways. Then the rapid flow of movement starts and watching feels rather like being carried down a river. Dancers touch each other elbow to elbow, form a line and spin, engage in a quick lift or two, then break it up and run down a path to another space. Free to move, we can watch from inches away, while 500 metres in the background another group dips and swirls. Our unusually intimate contact with the dances contrasts with our considerable distance from the musicians, positioned up on the bridge over the hall. But the music is carefully amplified, and spacious enough not to clog up the acoustics of this cathedral-like venue.

Though filled an event, this is sprawling happening, but a tightly focused 45 minutes of dance and music, created weekly each time. Ekuehisa Kuugi, ex-Jazz, ex-Ballet, Kuugi has been Cunningham's Music Director since 1995. Christian Wolff made his first piece for the company in 1952. Half a century later, both are well into their sixties, but playing alongside the much younger Winant with a kind of dignified comradery. Winant's background includes Mr Bungle, John Zorn's Naked City and contributions to Sonic Youth's contemporary composition project, *Goodbye Twentieth Century*. In this context their music feels perfect and their arms clear. Cunningham's constant show leaves us with the satisfaction of watching a piece whose every element is well matched.



MATMOS SAN FRANCISCO YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS USA

BY PHILIP SHERBURN

Domestic politics have never been far from San Francisco's minds. From the gentrification battles of the late 90s to ongoing attempts to legalise gay marriage – not to mention the city's second depopulation vote last year – private lives and public concerns are never far apart. So it's not surprising that Drew Daniel and MC Schmidt, who live together as a couple as well as working together in the duo Matmos, took Yerba Buena's invitation of a two week residency more or less literally. For the show, they moved almost the entire contents of their home studio – synthesizers, mixing desks, a baby grand draped with a coyote pelt, a fake human skeleton, coffee mugs, easy chairs, cymbals, miscellaneous recorders, etc – into the cavernous gallery space, building a sort of live/work outpost on a square of oriental rug.

While not going to the physical extremes of Marina Abramovic's *The House With the Open View*, in which the artist lived for 12 days without food or privacy atop a series of platforms accessible only by ladders made of knives, nor to the confessional extent of Tracy Gritti's *My Dad*, Matmos's installation – which required the artist's presence only during museum hours, allowing them to return to their half-gutted apartment at night – nevertheless put the pair in the spotlight for eight hours a day. Whether as a means of deflecting attention, or simply to make the time pass, they invited a number of friends and collaborators – including McSOS, J Lesser, People Like Us, Wobbly, Sutcliffe – to join them for

performances and improvisations. Much of the exhibition's charge came from these events, which ranged from the opening night's rough reworks of material from the duo's latest album *The Civil War* to extended electroacoustic jam sessions.

Restless practitioners of musique concrète, Matmos are probably the most resourceful sound sculptors in contemporary electronic music, four days from the exhibition's close, they highlighted domestic scenes by inviting their friends Sutcliffe and Safety Screens (who share a house themselves) to make pancakes in the gallery. As Sutcliffe laddered batter and griddled flapjacks, Schmidt held a mic to the skillet, sampling the sizzle; Daniel and Safety Screens folded the sounds into dense, digital improvisations while audience members munched on Sutcliffe's cooking. The set, which lasted for several hours, ranged from chattering clicks to lush, psychedelic drones fashioned from drummed guitar and layered glitches, its ebbs and flows suggested the process of creation itself, in which stand-out moments drift like well-contoured bergs amidst a resounding flow.

As the end of that long day, Daniel wrote by email: "I mean we ARE losing our minds as we've been improvising for at least three hours every day for the last two weeks but now that we've entered total madness it's all starting to make sense. Or something." And indeed it did. The following day Matmos were joined by Bleavin Bleatman and J Lesser of Sogor for a similarly free-ranging improvisation which saw Schmidt stalking the workshop perimeter while reaching a cryptic script, Daniel pulled the skeleton into his lap and draped the piano's strings with the body's detached arm, while Sogor attended to pool-crusted loudspeakers. Strange, even preconscious activities, but the



Left: Screen grabs from Sun City Girls' ethnographic video journals. Right: Spunk's *Hot Bole* video in *No Title Performance And Sparkling Water*



seriousness and unconsciousness with which the artists undertook their roles allowed a beautiful fusion between the life of the mind and its projection in public—in between work, work, work and play, play, play.

NAT PWE: BURMA'S CARNIVAL OF SPIRIT SOUL

SUBLINE FREQUENCIES SPOOD DVD
JEMAA EL FNA: MOROCCO'S RENDEZVOUS OF THE DEAD, NIGHT MUSIC OF MARRAKECH
SUBLINE FREQUENCIES SPOOD DVD
BY MARCUS BOON

Sublime Frequencies is a Seattle-based label run by Sun City Girls' Richard and Alvin Bishop, "focused on an aesthetic of retro-graphy and soulful experience inspired by music and culture, world travel, research, and the pioneering recording labels of the past including Decca, Smithsonian Folkways, Ethnic Folkways, Lyndon, Nonesuch, Explorer, Musicaphone, Bannerline, UNESKO, Playhouse, Musical Atlas, Chant Du Monde, BAM, Tangent, and Topic." The label has already put out CDs of radio collages from Java and Samratra made by the Bishop brothers during their travels (sections of which were originally released on Sun City Girls CDs such as the aptly titled *Carnival Follies* [Resurrection series]).

Of the label's first DVD releases, *Jemaa El Fna* was filmed in Marrakech's famous square of the same name in April 2002 by Hajar Mayet and edited with Rick Bishop. The DVD gives a pretty straightforward, an belated view of what goes on musically at night there as groups of musicians—representing different Moroccan popular and spiritual traditions—gather in different parts of the square and attract crowds of onlookers. It's certainly one of the most musically rich places on the planet. Much of the music actually sounds pretty similar to the Sun City Girls, especially some of the fierce electrified oud playing. The camera moves from group to group, dwelling on moments of weirdness, an eight-year-old girl singing with a group of drummers, a man with a beaded up portable turntable playing a

stack of vintage Moroccan 45s, the sound clacking in the night air. Strangely, the DVD omits the most exciting musical activity to be found in the square—that of the Gnass musicians, who remain in the square, chanting and playing the *gambri* and *spah* (castanets), long after the other groups have gone home.

There's no commentary or indication of what exactly we're seeing, which gets us away from the dense clutches of ethnology, only to present another kind of cliché, that of the nameless, exotic Other. Make no mistake, the *Jemaa El Fna* is exotic, but what's going on there also has a pretty specific meaning to locals (for example when I visited the square recently, I was told that one of the groups is a Nasse El Ghilwan cover band—sort of the Moroccan equivalent of a Zap cover band or a jam band).

Nat Pwe: *Burma's Carnival Of Spirit Soul*, filmed by the Bishop brothers in Burma in August 2002, is a more substantial film. Indeed, this amazing arena festival held north of Mandalay each year, in which ecstatic acrobats dressed perform the parts of Nats (Burmese spirit deities), while groups of possessed dancers move around them, looks like big gigs all around. While there's better written documentation, the DVD again suffers from the same lack of information as to what we're seeing, and the reduction of the carnival's richness to a blur of visceral sound and colour makes the film oddly reminiscent of advertising or tourist promotional films.

The Bishop brothers' enthusiasm for their material is unquestionable. Both these DVDs offer material that is otherwise unavailable and extremely important at this moment of Anglo-American paranoia about the non-Western world. The brothers seem to be aiming at what anthropologist James Clifford called an "ethnographic surrealism" that penetrates the boundaries between "our time" in the West and "theirs" in those non-Western places (and there are many) where music is still something sacred, collective and festive. But the translation of the visceral pleasures of ethnographic sound, which the Sun City Girls' own music depends

upon so gloriously into film, is a tricky process.

While it may seem that the visceral thrill of an encounter with Sufi trance music in the *Jemaa el Fna* is best shown through an approach that lets the music speak for itself, filming is itself already an intense process of translation and reduction that evinces and truly transforms whatever it is that happens when one stands in a crowd in a square, unable to hold a conversation with your neighbours, yet high on everything. The stark monologues in a Helmut or Chris Marker documentary or the highly refined

aesthetics of body and sound in Maya Deren's key voodoo doc *The Divine Horseman* serve precisely to interrupt this process, and to let something pass in that moment of interruption. The Sun City Girls' own performances in some of these locations are another such type of disruption, and you long to see some footage of this. The Sun City Girls guard their own photographic images very carefully, but at one point in *Jemaa El Fna*, a tall guy with a moustache is captured playing guitar in front of a somewhat bemused crowd. I have no idea whether this person is Rick Bishop or a young guy from Marrakech. There's no way to tell. But it's a lovely moment of disorientation, one in which that old time Carnival Follies is truly resurrected.

NO TITLE PERFORMANCE AND SPARKLING WATER

OSLO HENIE ONSTAD KUNSTSTERN
NORWAY
BY ROY YOUNG

In modern poetry, the notion of utterance, that fine line between speech and no speech, between inchoate sound and mouth-formed language, is central. In certain contemporary music contexts, notably those in which the division between noise and sounding are the principal focus of exploration, similar notions are pertinent. For modern poets to enjoy anything like good health in the 21st century, that notion must also be at the centre of it. And so it is with this premiere, a new work by Maya SR Rayne, the 30-year-old prodigy whose *Voice* CD on Ruse

Grammofon (2002) introduced an amazing tale on notions of the broken voice via her brilliant vocal parties, often achieved via deft manipulations of a tape machine. Her Improv quartet Spunk are one of the ones around which she has built this awkwardly titled opera, more of a series of phantasmagorical trances tracing the origin of utterance from the creation of mankind to the sacrifice of Christ. It is, however, essential to consult the notes to know any of this, as the sense of narrative is difficult to detect in the ad hoc decisions played on stage.

In the white space of this modern art center on the outskirts of Oslo, a chamber-sized music ensemble led by Rayne occupy the left hand side. Various actions take place on the floor, while video projections plaster the back walls. These are largely slow motion footage of faces and solids pressing the surface of water, in a tank or the sea; there are also unclothed members of the cast occasionally glimpsed wandering out into threatening air. There is an abiding sense of borders, thresholds breached, counterpointing the theme of the opera. Its shape, apparently, is drawn from the legendary *Nag Hammadi* library, a third-century collection of gnostic texts in the beginning, "Light-goddess Sophia gives birth to Yabatoah, a dark shadow seeking absolute power." The texts, and the vocalists, signify ways in which giving form to language—language—leads to divine understanding; the word is divine, not human. The opening sequence, featuring the sacred dani angela (Anthea) is impressive, as sound seems to be struggling to emerge as the human frame. But it's difficult to keep the shaping idea in mind among the daily medium of clashing styles that ensues. As well as free jazz attacks in which group members swamp the stage, and intervene into the action itself, there are vocal passages that pasture the music hall or Bernstein-style song, a climactic post-rock off-dance, and a closing large sequence that seems to indicate the betrothal of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Simple scenery blocks certainly define the space, but by the time a small pink hat starts whizzing about the floor of its own accord, the sense of form is difficult to ward. □

The Inner Sleeve

Artwork selected this month by Terre Thaemlitz



STYX PIECES OF EIGHT AIM RECORDS 1978 DESIGNED BY HYPOC088

As many have done before in this column, I feel obligated to bemoan the decline of vinyl and lament the impact record sleeves hold over CDs. I also have to excuse my final selection by acknowledging all of the better choices I could-

should've made. . . Kraftwerk's glow-in-the-dark "L2" or "Noun Lighter," Laibach's vinyl edition of "Saufriten," Devo's poster monochromy from *New Radicals*, the hand-print cover to Alter Dimer's self-titled debut, or the laser-etched grooves on the B side of Styx's *Paradise Theater* (Fucking cool! Find it in a discount-bin!). . . Which brings us to my final selection, the giftset from Styx's *Pieces of Eight*. A few years

ago while writing the Euphorias column, I asked you to remind me to tell the story of when I was beaten up by a gang of scots because I owned a copy of this record before they did, apparently defaming Styx's image because I was such a terminal nerd. Little did those thugs know I bought it by mistake. . . I really wanted *The Grand Illusion* for that amazing synth solo on "Come Fly Away".

Suckers! Even as a child the Easter Island motif struck me as a bit lame (along with that "Lords Of The Ring" song - dumb). But before you start my usual diatribes - older women and gay-bots (Tommy Shaw was such a fox) - I can't say whether this jacket inspired my object choices, or if its appeal was symptomatic of then-surgeoning tendencies. . . but I still think this cover is sexy, inside and out. ☐

Go To:



In the mid-80s Brian Eno speculated that in the future, children would gossip to their parents, "You actually listen to the same CD many times over?" With that, he predicted a future for music when you never have to hear the same music twice, and where machines would generate sounds controlled by parameters set by the consumer. At New Year 2000, London art commissions *Antagrad* planned Jim Finner's *Longplayer* (www.longplayer.org) in the *Winky Bush* Lighthouse - where Michael Pereday kept his studio and discovered electromagnetic induction in the early 1800 - a thousand-year long piece of music which started to play on 1 January 2000 and will continue to play until repetition for 1000 years.

A similar idea is the notion of a *betel* online radio station (www.4and.org). A self-styled generative music radio station,

and%Y% casts as a host for computer-driven audio programming that is entirely automated, where all transmissions are composed in real time by a computer. All audio is generated on demand by a series of artist-developed software programs. A crop of techies including Niallpoint, Josef Plank and Felix vs. Rimmon are currently have software to be experienced on the site and, especially, whenever I've tuned in, it sounds a bit like *De Laund* on repeat play.

There's not many bells and whistles at *Singfish* (www.singfish.com), but this is one of the most useful sites I've seen in a while (besides currency converters and online banking of course). Anyone fed up with the sheer amount of (and confusion surrounding) poor to peer hosts, shareware clients, and other file sharing systems, but still wouldn't mind downloading the odd MP3 here and there should bookmark this.

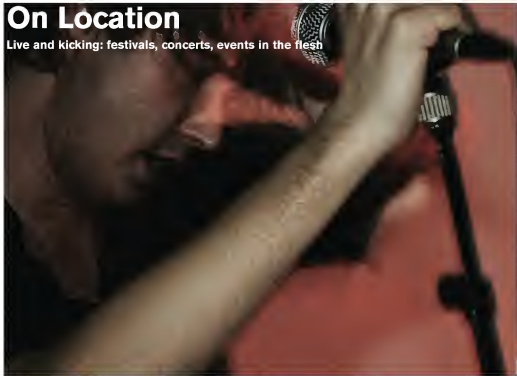
Reminiscent of any simple search engine, *Singfish* searches only for audio material for MP3s, and, quickly, finds them. A random search for John Zorn turned up over ten pages of links to files plus the respective host sites. But bear in mind *Singfish* doesn't discern between streaming and MP3s, so you can't know if you can download them, and of course many of the audio files will be snippets and teasers rather than the full track.

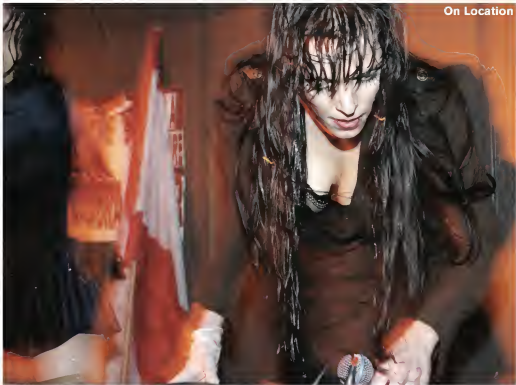
Idle thumbs should check out the *Anzgame* at www.pizzapiesoul.com/anzgame/game.html. An ideal lunchtime pursuit, the game involves steering a water around, persuading the jazz band to play, and dishing out food and drink. If you succeed, your guests will lounge around lazily on the dancefloor, all the while listening to the Enginapopping and jazz on show.

ANNE HILDE NESSET

On Location

Live and kicking: festivals, concerts, events in the flesh





MARKE B FESTIVAL BERLIN CAFE MOSKAU

BY CHRIS SHARP

"Please wait for the next smile," says the sign next to the reception desk. The Park Inn Hotel has a game clock at presenting the kind of corporate vapidly that the international traveller no doubt expects these days, and the onsite saxophonist in the lobby loiters away in the same spirit, delivering a satirically bland version of "If I Drifted" to the hosts of beer-quaffing businessmen that populate the bar. But this is Alexanderplatz, the vast, sterile heart of what was East Berlin, and the hotel is a 40-story block of concrete visible from all over the city. In an architectural context like this, such tiny nods in the direction of globalisation still feel like the first tentative outcroppings of returning vegetation after an ice age, even though it's 14 years, almost to the day, since the Wall came down.

Berlin-Mitte, the old heart of the city which spent more than four decades isolated in East Germany, has over the last decade drawn in people from all over Germany, and indeed the world. Berlin music is predominantly set the work of Berliners — rents are cheap here, but, in

a city so scarred by history you need a short memory to really take advantage of them. And perhaps it's only outsiders who qualify.

But whether MarkeB, now in its third year and a confirmed focal point for underground musical activity here, is more an attempt to bolster a fragile ecosystem than an unconscious celebration of creativity, nobody seems to be thinking of the past at the Cafe Moskau. The present location of Ocean Club — the hosts and organizers of this gathering of the Berlin tribes — is a former East German Army officers' club. Just 15 minutes after the doors have opened, the place is already thronged, and everyone is intent on exploring an upstairs room that looks like a halfway house between a comprehensive school canteen and an art fair. There's a table-tennis table, vases full of giant paper poppies, mobiles constructed from record sleeves, and a good couple of dozen monitors displaying everything from prelapsarian games of Pong to impressionistically-collaged video footage of road accidents.

All the participating labels — and there are about 40, including Bitch Control, Burglary, City Centre Offices, IK7, Kitty Yo, Morn Music, —escape, Shikazuki, and many others — have set up treble tables, displaying a cornucopia of

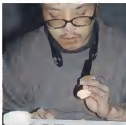
CDs and merchandise. There's no denying the enterprise of these people, and it's genuinely boring to see their kaleidoscope of ideas, gathered together in the same space. And as the weekend gathers pace, it's obvious that the music can't be straggled into any kind of generic pigeonhole. For every Eikehard Ehlers, who conforms to type by sitting perched on a stack of beer crates, summoning a swirling parade of amorphous sound from his Powerbook — there's an Angie Reed, who comes on like a Lolita diva, her song crawling riding a succession of bewily gooses, taking in squably electro and Garagey slatter with equal aplomb.

Much excitement is centred on the performance of Kitty Yo's most recent signing — Rhythm King And Her Friends — a trio of politically-charged young women whose lithic, angular songs and megaphone-filtered polemics carry on where the DFA romas of Le Tigre's "Decoytact" left off. Their strident energy is deftly counterpointed by Morn Music's Gutier, whose sweetly circular pop frameworks are gradually clothed in tidal swamps of sampled textures. Even more approachable is the music of Dub Tector, whose tonal tribulations represent the unashamedly melodic approach of the City Centre Offices label; again, it's one man

and his computer, but he greets his rowdyists after a soothing way into Saturday's sprawling all-nighter.

There's really too much to take in — at one end of the spectrum, Girls Get Girls combine bruising beats and twitchy tumbleweed, and at the other, Phantom/Ghost's curiously stately slow anthems conjure an ancient Wiener sense of romantic doom. And several acts belie the claim that electronic music lacks stage presence — chief amongst them Cobra Killer, who looks like refugees from *Faster Pussycat! Kill! Kill!* and perform their set of charged, mutant disco like a pair of deranged go-go girls. Johnson's touch of homemade surrealism is almost as striking — their line-up includes a cross-dressing Rasta and a female vocalist who croons the word "fah" over and over from beneath a safety helmet adorned with velcroed-on animal ears. All in all, it's riotously clear by 3am on Sunday morning — as Plik seamlessly take up Thomas Fehlman's hands-aflot balloon and deliver an exhilarating set of tough-stepping laptop techno.

But whoever the people are that make up the scene, and wherever they come from, they're bringing plenty of energy and imagination to the party. At MarkeB, at least, there was no waiting for a smile. □



TERMITE CLUB 2003 20TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL LEEDS ADELPHI/BRUDENELL SOCIAL CLUB/ROYAL PARK CELLARS

BY ADI BLOSS

The Termit Club's festival saw the Leeds-based promoters celebrating 20 years of both delighting and challenging the expectations of audience members. So it's entirely fitting that on the first night, Sylvia Helfert faced an unexpected collaboration with an extra lanky driver: she on bowed bicycle wheel and digital delay, he interlarding with a formless form titled "Whoever owns that Grog Vexhall of Cavalier parked outside had better move it fast, or it's going to be towed away". Helfert continued unswayed, looping and layering the wheel's eerie wails and yelps. Whilst unsettling, Helfert's music was both warm-hearted and accessible, drawing sweet melodies from a saw and discordant ones from her violin.

Earlier, Annette Kerba had played guitar in the most low profile manner imaginable: horizontal on a table and hidden by her making console, with actual plucking kept to a minimum. Instead, Kerba created a soundscape of buzzes, contact

noise crackles, sizzles, strained bowed notes and bell-like echoes. The effect was restless rather than oppressive as it, freed from the constraints of chords and fretted solos, a new range of sounds was opened up.

The evening concluded with the duo of The Wire's Dave Bell and Mike Adcock: Bell on a variety of wooden wind instruments, including a curious double horn and a towering set of panpipes. Whilst Adcock brandished a squeakbox and scraped beads across a classical guitar, Bell nodded back and forth on a furiously cranked foorboard. A final collaboration between all four musicians produced a ghostly piece, each part sharing sympathetically with the whole.

Ascension opened the second night with "our first show in five fucking years", but they wasted no time on fanfares, plunging straight into the murky waters of psychedelic jazz noise. Tony Irving's rilling, symbol-heavy drum provided the propulsive force, whilst Stefan Jaworski's guitar barked from strangled gasps to constantly rising, near-Henry May melodic line a strategy that was thrilling in the short term, but felt stagnant by the end of their set.

The last time anyone of Sahm'splach's ilk played the Brudenell, it was French

performance artist Coates, whose 'porno-social ritual' came to a premature end after the management objected to his troupe urinating on each other. So the Swiss collective must have been on their best behaviour, as instead of dead fish or ass trumpets, they concentrated on trying to shock with sound, albeit with a healthy dose of humour. One member paced back and forth, his coughing and laboured breathing building to a cacophony of screams, laughs and repeated until the original assigned vocal seemed arrival. To finish, the two shuffled and hopped around on mid-air chairs like some kind of grotesque stop-frame animation. Following this, the set by Masami Akita, aka Metzbow, seemed almost humdrum. His trouser-shaking seismic rumble won the prize as the night's loudest; however the relentlessness extended to a sort of variety, or much in the way of development.

On to a packed Royal Park for the final night, where the ten Certain Arts displayed the equipment and immobile concentration of home radio enthusiasts, mixing their woe and flutter with low pitched rumbles, scarcely moving from giant wing-beat sounds to gentle machine gun fire.

Prior to his set, Lol Coehill spent a long time

arranging a chair, turning it over and back again in a search for the ideal acoustics. Only he may have been able to discern any difference, but his fiddliness translated into a breath-taking control and precision, twisting his shoulders and yanking his soprano sax to one side, Coehill mouthed rich, narrative phrases, darting around with staccato between-notes before melting into beautiful harmonies.

Coehill's set would have been the highlight of any other event, but headliner Paul Hession, Alan Wilkinson and Simon Fell lived up to their reputation as Termit Club founders and stalwarts. Wilkinson's baritone sax was ripe with muscular themes, weaving up into wails that spilled over into his ecstatic vocals, his solo work produced both long, filigree phrases and the uninhibited simplicity of a mine's bellows. Hession oversaw his fluid, tumbling drums with the calm assurance of an expert plotspinner, whilst Fell threw himself onto the neck of his double bass, virtually dangling from it as he reached for ever-higher notes, at last played with one bow on either side of the instrument's bridge. An unforgettable end to the festival, their set peppered through any barriers between the cerebral and the visceral with the poppy energy of an animal of anniversary fireworks. □

SOUNDING BEIJING 2003 BEIJING LOFT SPACE

BY STEVE BARKER

Beijing is a place where the face of Fidel Castro adorns the cover of *Halo!* magazine, where there are more McDonalds than in New York City and where a three-bed hotel apartment was built in just eight days. Everything is possible but from a Western perspective very little makes sense. Sounding Beijing 2003, the city's first international electronic music festival, is the concept of Beijing-based sound and Web artist, and founder of the Post-concrete label, Daijun Yao. Two hard years in the planning, with handfuls of sponsorship rejections from the enraging multinationals whose brands incessantly deface the cityscape, the event has only been made possible due to Yao's determined vision — a dark world out with the Left for the performance space, with the artists sidestepping their own censors.

Cynics have been wondering if anybody will actually show up for an experimental music/noise festival spread over four evenings at a cost of eighty yuan (about \$100 per person). But this risk has been managed well: Ken Fields, an American professor at the local conservative university, and his wife Yu Hongmei, a virtuoso of the erhu (a two-stringed Chinese fiddle best known for playing melancholic tunes), are on the bill for the first night. Their presence brings both poor students and wealthy honchos to populate the floor and balcony respectively. The night opens with a competent run-down of uninspired laptop licks led in a giddy rite from Beijing's San Deven (aka Sukun, aka Panda Irem). But things lurch up as Zhou Pei aka Ronet takes the stage. Not that

his presence is commanding. With his scarily-still skull suit and specs conspicuously sliding down his nose he looks every bit the transsexual accountant from *Gullin* on his day off. But this is different. Ronet, a serial roller move performer, straddles and abuses his mixer, cans, and his self-built noise generator, provoking a rash stagewalks for snaps. His latest album on Beijing's Subjunct label *Try It On For Size* has a free condom stuffed in the jewel box. His next album is *Acrology*. Despite blinding out and playing for too long for the rest of his set, the impression is already imprinted — the boy is a stone-killer electro-rod star.

Ken and Hongmei are given a euphoric reception. Their music in *Readers Digest* toungeau backing track and the live erhu — though undisturbedly skilful — still defies my critical analysis; to my ears it cannot be distinguished from the sound of blind beggar boys playing under the third ring road's underpasses. Austrian Helmut Scheffer has been a cold spring since unhooking at his gig, and his set provides a welcome respite. The term laptop musician conjures up images of static concentration. Scheffer defies the stereotype as he meekly assaults his computer and mixing desk, launching wave upon wave of noise in a remorselessly rhythmic pace lasting less than 15 minutes. An audience normally covered by protocol elicits.

Night two opens with the Shanghai duo DextroX (comprising Ding Dawen and Lou Nank, aka BG). The crowd has thinned out a little and it's rumored that a bunch have asked for their money back — they must have assumed "electronic" equated to techno — but the act is sticky IDM-like, with an Apple shining in the dark next to a DPC. But not the real value of international input becomes dramatically apparent with the appearance of the San Francisco based French artist Lauretta Soriano and her sonic glow, seen with pods that trigger

both sound and light. The time it takes the photographs but the crowd that gather around the stage in anticipation of something special and they are not disappointed. In these places that combine sound and alcohol, light and shadow, movement and speech, Soriano goes beyond mere drama. After her appearance, the Beijing-based duo fms go home to rethink their performance strategy for the next night. Randy Yao takes the relationship between noise and movement to more brutal levels as he forces a screaming dialogue between his microphone and his bank of amps, with few a gasps for it. Guangzhou's Zhong Mingji gets the award for most stylish presentation as his heavily bespectacled face remains unmoved in a full 40 minute-plus set spent worshipping in the church of Maxwell — dense, impenetrable multilayered filigree of noise, with the occasional vague promise of cracks and fissures that never materialize.

Night three and the beast that is Beijing shows its true colours, as the Loft's available space is cut in half by the letting of floorpace to a commercial museum exhibition, Wang Chongchun, from North East China, followed by Shanghai's Ding Dawen aka ay, open the evening in equally earnest fashion with computer sets that are the most genuine of the festival. But then BG — Lou Nank's solo project — starts to build an impressively structured set, with beats emerging into the most entertaining performance of the festival. In a surreal twist, electro-musician Jean-Michel Jarre materializes in the audience and I find myself sitting next to bubble Adjet. Jarre is preparing for a concert in China next year and looking for a support act. The first international musician to perform here back in 1983, Jean donated a Korg MS-20 analogue modular arpegg to a local college. Returning two years later he found the model lovingly reproduced with Chinese characteristics. His attendance is serendipitous

in the extreme, as Jarre falls for BG. Organizer Dagan Yao finishes the night with a set supported by one half of Beijing's top digital video animation team BGQ, introduced by manipulated video samples and moving on to fluttering noise.

The final night is soothed in by fms (Silchun's Zhang Jun and long-term, Beijing-based Norwegian celtic Christian Vissari) introducing a nubreaker cascade of space and contemplation with "Zenhead", made up from a series of isolated notes sampled from plucked strings, their decays and dissolves stretched in time. The following piece is based on captured ambience from Zhang's recent live trip and is equally meditative in style. (Lauretta Soriano claims she's going back to the States to rethink her set with more space.) Another Beijing act Wang Fan begins with chiming handbells and, employing only a 16 track Roland hard disk recorder and prepared CDs, proceeds to deliver an accomplished and inspiring set that could have taken its place proudly at any festival in the world. Meanwhile, Zhigang Kerkowicz has been staking the perimeter of the venue, with a soul bowl broken up by cigarettes. Can the big build-up possibly be followed by a transcendence set? Well, no. It's all over in just short of 15 minutes and the baffled audience don't even know it. Luckily for Kerkowicz, Helmut Scheffer joins him for an encore, violently maintaining the place and ultimately pushing his laptop off the table. It creates half the feet onto the floor, but the music and Helmut keep on rocking as the on-deck mark takes control. And then it's all over. With most of the Chinese artists performed here for the first time in public, Beijing needs to go on. Although Melvin McLaren was here recently to sign all girl rock group The Wild Strawberries, the future really lies in labels like Warp, Rephlex and their offspring agreeing with Ronet and the others. It's got to happen sooner or later. □

Clockwise from top left: Zhou Pei (aka Ronet), Wang Fan, BG, DextroX (aka BG and ay), Zhigang Kerkowicz & Helmut Scheffer in Beijing

TERRAPLANE PLUS LONDON SPITZ

BY MIKE BARNES

Elbow Sharp is the latest in a long line of musicians who have attempted to update the blues. Billed as "Went Blues for a New Generation", his group Terraplane give the genre a good — and respectful — rouging up. But then it is the most robust of musical forms, having withstood dilution by 60s blues boomers, melting by power trio and all that the heavy metallurgists could throw in. The group could just as perfectly be billed Blues Ancient And Modern, as the "Plus" added to their name by the UK tour is Hubert Sumlin. 72 on the day of the show. The guitarist's oblique, choppy chordings and keening lead lines with Howlin'

Wolf helped define electric Chicago blues as it fed into rock 'n' roll in the 50s — making him not only a living legend but one of the most influential musicians of the last 50 years.

In Terraplane's music, the avant and the blues are occasionally separated. The set opens with drummer Sam Cain playing a rolling, polyrhythmic groove — accented with New Orleans marching band syncopations — undrumpied by bassist Dave Holm's perked tuba lines, which are further decorated by Curtis Fowler's trombone melodies. Sharp plays soprano sax here, his lines erupting towards to a hard, shawm-like riveness, sprilling off as far from the tune's head as possible without breaking the thread. On "Cacklerbox" innovation was woven with tradition in a one-chord blues riding on a low-slung, funky groove redolent of

The Meters and fired up by Sharp's lap steel playing. The arrival of the physically imposing Eric Mingus then grounded the music — and galvanised the musicians — with a vocal performance of thrilling intensity.

When Hubert Sumlin took the stage for "Sitting On Top Of The World", singing the song on which he once backed Howlin' Wolf, he pointed the group back to the source. It seems that Sumlin takes a while to warm up these days were borne out by some strongly tentative and incoherent playing, but he grew in confidence and composure, playing some sweet, upward-pointing notes and staccato rhythmic dashes on "Black Door Man" and "But My Broom". Mingus didn't try to ape the Wolf but put his own stamp on these standards. On the contemporary "Old Blues" he ran through his

complete vocal repertoire, dredging up deep howls, leaping up to shattering falsettos, and bottling in his quips in a sepia-cast set, one time mulling a certain "lean political" line about to "kick my dick".

As if given a half time lesson, Terraplane tore into the second set, their push/pull rhythms (remnants of Little Feat, Ry Cooder and Captain Beefheart circa Electric Spont) now played with extra snap. On one instrumental, Sharp played a lap steel solo of such velocity and intensity he stood gawping at his instrument, apparently assaulted by the sound he was producing. Sumlin was near overwhelmed when accompanied with a trill-like cello and when he later turned up his guitar for "Little Red Rooster" and "Wang Dang Doodle", his lines sang out clear and true. □

On Location



INSTALL 03 GLASGOW THE ARCHES

UK

NEIL COOPER

When Install 03 all day festival of "Bare New Music" was launched three years ago in the murky subterranean repurposed of The Arches — a converted relay settings and a building still resonating with the burr of just arrivals and departures — it allowed its audience to drift through multiple spaces, absorbing sounds that often laid across each other, melding into an aural mass that moved in and out of focus. This year, it opted to occupy two of the building's largest spaces and, while more conventionally contained, it remained equally iconoclastic in form and content.

The Paragon Ensemble, Scotland's leading contemporary classical ensemble, opened proceedings with a tipped and strapping improvisation of scarified Berceuse, marking summer fête and cello serenade to an impending laptop clip-clip before erupting into a gallop, obliquely referencing Gershwin and Highland dance en route.

In stark contrast, Witthoes's centromaterialist analogue cabaret came on somewhere between Beavis and Butthead and an Essex boy Suicide. Fueled by self-loathing and adolescent snarls as it was, hearing an orchestrated audience chant of "D'you believe in rock 'n' roll?" — at first of all places — was far funnier and infinitely more shocking than their other material, however ironically delivered.

Then again, it was a strangely fitting prelude to Rygi's (aka's) performance of "CO Sound System", the musician and his laptop like, diminutive foundation stones in a very rock 'n' roll wall of Marshall amps. As it transpired, Rygi's technofied soundclash between the Marshalls and a state of the art Meyer system was akin to a 21st century version of second-hand shop vinyl showcases for stereo sound. Not unappealing, but not wholly engaging either.

Ukiwo Cosmos, the barely-there collaboration between snowed-out Sachio M and vocalist Amy Yoshida, taking concentrated sound to its purest limit, Yoshida's series of butterfly kisses, newborn yelps and hail-bell squalls and exhalations, offset

by a set of piercing, above-the-radar extraplanets from Sachio, demanded maximum concentration. There were some who couldn't take the strain, but for those who tuned in, the effect was mesmerizing, made even more so by an apparent glitch in the railway timetable that left even more silent spaces above.

Following this with Merbow's extended sonic crunches was both perverse and inspired, even if he didn't entirely live up to expectations. There's undeniable craft to Merbow's (aka's) focused manipulations of the nervous system, which battered some into willing submission whilst wailing others up, the bunker-like surroundings invited the apocalypse, but got something close to subtlety instead. That you could hear at least one chat yapping merrily at the back of the room suggested signs had been missed.

In near gloom, AMW's John Tilbury dedicated their set to German writer and musician Peter Mikis Wilton, a long-term AMW friend and collaborator who died recently. This seemed to set up an air of somberly melancholy for the performance that followed — a work of disciplined restraint and beauty — in which piano

and percussion lines stopped so sharply it was as if they'd had the breath sucked out of them. Ukiwo Cosmos, the spaces between the music were immense, as they conjured out of thin air a slow motion improvisation of elegant grace and beauty.

The act that followed couldn't be further removed again. Japanese agents provocateurs The Blueprints — reinvented as the three drum kit Vendors — kickstarted a rolling thunder so relentless as to inspire near euphoria amongst those who'd already witnessed Merbow. With a portable box of tricks as his seton, leader and conductor Yamatake Eye set himself at the centrifugal heart of the group. Once into their stride, they pounded out their metronomic voodoo with enough accompanying squelches to suggest 1970s electronic jazz at its most dense. Before long, Eye is clambering astride the snare, a true sweet genius virtuoso marching on the walls of Jericho, his segment in tow. It's a thrilling spectacle, which, in its intuitive understanding of the full potential dramatic power of performance, is designed to leave you reeling. □

ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES (DAY 2) LOS ANGELES LONG BEACH USA

BY RICHARD HENDERSON

The latest Californian installment of All Tomorrow's Parties was coaxed by Matt Groening, creator of The Simpsons and recorded music master of some notoriety. In exploring his choice of acts, Groening cited the Velvet Underground's song from which the festival was named; his choices would include both spiritual contemporaries of that group and its stylistic heirs. A very open-ended interpretation of that sentiment might explain the first day's amalgam of Balk to Spill, Dinosaur Family, The Magic Beard (with drummer John French's vocals starkly in as the current Captain Beefheart) and previous ATP programming Sonic Youth. It was during the festival's second day, however, that Groening's stated intent rang imminently true. Both within and around the permanently moored Queen Mary, the calibrated doses, exoskeletal volume and transgressive spirit of The Velvet were celebrated by an endearingly quantic array of acts.

James Chance And The Contortions played ATP's perk stage, a few hundred yards down the shoreline from the ocean liner Ambiance shortly seamed stacked against Canine and company outdoor venue, festival crowd and, as the final lightning flared, a lesser reunion of East Village denizens met here. Heretofore crumbled at the sheer inappropriateness of it all, like Christopher Lee confronting down in a Hammer vampire film, the bandleader's powdered wig and black suit reinforced this

impression, suggesting both mortician and cadaver. But the reunited Contortions played as they've ever have, turning a set filled to the brim with life and ill-tempered exuberance. Pat Place and Jerry Harris retain their unlikely chemistry as guitarists, keyed respectively to the noise-making potential inherent in a bottleneck slide and the clearing of new ground in the underbelly of funk. Don Cleveland's drumming serves the somnambulant doses of Chance's music well as ever did, while Adele Belter marked singing distance from an electric keyboard. Noting that she hadn't played with his group since 1979, Chance traded vocals with Belter on "Almost Black." In that moment, they became Dick and Dee Dee gone horribly (and wonderfully) wrong. Chance remains a confrontational presence, though his saxophone solo — petal mil sedates made more than — are now familiar and welcomed. Chance himself is still want to take a swing at audience members who drag too close. His dives to the stage lip showed the fearlessness of age, righting himself took a bit longer in the present day.

Deep in the Queen Mary's hold, the ship stage storied under the massed weight of many members and much more gear belonging to special New York collective Jackie-D Motherfucker (shouting, on this occasion, some words of Godspoke told Black Emperor), The adepts, clinging to the stair railings that agitated three flights upward around the group, assumed reverential quiet in anticipation of the band that gradually ramped up from DJMF's bay keyboards, antique tape recorders and tentacles, vibes, assorted percussion, vocals and vintage guitars. Group members crouched at centre stage and walked between instruments, gradually augmenting the form of what would emerge as a pale force drone in many moments' time.

Soon thereafter, Jerry Rely and Stefano Scodanobio took the dimly lit stage and immediately collaborated, with not so many notes, how their ongoing collaboration has evolved since *Lazy Afternoon*, a recording made the day of their first meeting. Rely's synthesizer survived an earlier meeting by James Chance, now it featured ambience and traces of much earlier Rely's playing, in one moment offering tremulous-like swirls and in the next a water of digitally embossed baroque motifs, gave pause to wonder how he was ever labelled a minimalist, much less how that label has clung to him over time. As the composer sang a loveable jingle, his voice comparing favourably with that of his late teacher Pandit Pran Nath, Scodanobio manipulated the harmonics of his own ancient string bass to evoke the best acts and quaking aspect of Indian percussion. Though their audience was small at first, it offered thunderous applause for the duo, a northern Californian and an Italian playing with shared intuition, as though they were the Louvin Brothers of World Music.

No one witnessing The Stooges' first appearance at Detroit's Michigan Palace, as this water did in the early 70s, could have forecast the group's reunion three decades on (much less the sustained career and subsequent acrobatic wealth of their singer, Iggy Pop). Yet here they were, the classic act at ATP in the dead of night, returning to Southern California in the wake of their first, much-loathed resurgence at the Coachella festival. The band's initial release was described by the Detroit Free Press as "the sound of a nose blown at 33 1/3 rpm" — 30 years later, that self-litellid album and its sequel, *Funhouse*, are the Dead Sea Scrolls of punk rock. Those two LPs now comprise the majority of The Stooges' present-day act. As with The Contortions, the group performed their old

material as they've ever have. Obviously in better shape than anyone in his audience, Iggy leaps like a feral house from stool to end his voice, trilled with the flattened vowels of a *Mohammed*, a underbrush by the abuse he has heaped on it through the years. Ron Asheton's vocabulary of guitar riffs, further motivated by walk-whip pedal, is frozen in time, yet he and his bandmates play with fire, in the of the possessed. The ovation Minutemen bawled "Wee Wee" fills the sick vacancy in The Stooges' original lineup; pumping one leg nervously, he will exhibit only faint facial expression throughout the evening, that of a kid who had the good fortune to land the gig of his dreams. One can posit notions of "flow" and "inhabiting the moment", though both seem inadequate to capturing the intensity of Watt's contributions and his emulating focus throughout. With greater luck than they've already spent conquering addictions and bad record deals, The Stooges have found a kindred soul.

It is only when new material is introduced that the spell is broken. Iggy drops the vocal monomaniacs cultivated during his solo career. His lyrics, once shaped from monoglyphic riddles and taunts, now draw from the lexicon of therapy and the landscape of self-healing. "Dead Fucking Rock Star", the first encore, manages to take the oxygen from an open-air venue. But that the group (with Fehmius as player Steve Mackay aboard) launches into "I Wanna Be Your Dog" once again, and much to forget. This time and the others performed alongside it echo over the California coast as components of a revised classical canon. The songs remain standing, as does Iggy as do the Asheton brothers. It is a curious thing that has happened to their music, its revival a cause for joy yet as weird as given milk. It could be The Stooges designed it this way in the first place. □

Clockwise from bottom left: Whitehouse, Vulture and Atmosphere at festival.
The Stooges at ATP

HUDDERFIELD CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FESTIVAL HUDDERFIELD VARIOUS VENUES UK

BY ANDY HAMILTON

Thanks to Tim Bence headlining the first night, now faces were in the audience at the UK's premier New Music festival. Bence's Science Fiction consisted of guitarist Marc Dacot on electric and acoustic guitars, Craig Tieton on keyboards, Tom Rainey on drums and David Tom on guitars and electronics. In the first half they performed with classical saxophoneists The Art Quartet, inspiring the brilliance of the Sevans released on New World earlier this year, while the second half mostly featured the improvisers alone, with Dacot in explosive form. The leader's sleek and burn saxophone remains as bold and simple as that of Pharoah Sanders. A less successful crossing of genres was the late evening concert by the GRM Experience. Christian Fennesz, Mika Vainio and Christian Zentgraf prepared at a two-week interval at GRM studios in Paris, working in separate studios. Although the other intricate sounds of the Lawrence Bailey Theatre maybe didn't help, the collaboration seemed less than

the sum of its individual contributions, reminding of dead separated by inconclusive meanings.

Maximo Kagel's anti-operative *Me Nostrum* — named after what the Romans called "Dea Sea", the Mediterranean — proved the theatrical reveal of the festival. In a characteristic highlight, Kagel imagines a tribe of Amazonians "discovering" Europe, and treating its inhabitants as brutally as European adventures treated the natives of the Americas. Because of his assured place in the European avant-garde, it's easy to forget that Kagel was born and brought up in Buenos Aires, and he's explained how when he arrived in Europe in 1957, he began plotting his "retaliatory revenge". Mike Nostrum, written in 1973-75, is for six musicians and two actors, an Amazonian narrator/bardic voice in a typical Kagel concert speaks and sings in the patid German of a guest writer's dialect — translated into English in the surtitles, with the initial apology that "We made many mistakes in speed" — and a counterpoint who plays the oppressed natives of each country. The set is simple but effective — a pool symbolises the Mediterranean, with the odd palm tree for island. The musical style is quiet, sometimes descending into broad parody — most obviously an outrageously off-key take-off of that piece of

Rossini musical *Impression*. Mozart's *Rondo Alla Turca*, underlying the absurdist drama, for Kagel, an unusually clear message fuelled by rage. This was a magical revelation by a group of mostly German players including po-faced narrator Tobias Müller-Kopp and counterpoint Charles Maxwell.

The final concert saw the UK premiere of Hanson Birtwistle's *Theatre Games*, one of the composer's most compelling and complex orchestral scores, with two conductors — Marilyn Brabins and Pierre-André Valade — for 30 players. Birtwistle has long drawn on the resources of Greek myth. In this new composition, *Andræ's* thread, which enabled *Theatre Games* to escape from the Minotaur's labyrinth, is symbolised by the unending melody that weaves its way through the ensemble. It is played by a succession of soloists who walk to the front like big-band players taking their chorus, and the impressive performance by London Sinfonietta showed Birtwistle's unique, asymmetric, lush "swing". The first half of the concert featured *Tragedia* from 1965, the composition that first got the composer widespread attention. This was followed by *Wind Servants* by Hungarian composer Peter Eötvös, whose harmonic language — in this composition from the 80s showing affinities with Ligeti's postmodern style

— is rich and beguiling. The accordionist, in his solitary vantage point at the back of the stage, contributed just a small part to the opening movement, then had to wait for a long, plaintive cello.

Other highlights of a hugely enjoyable festival included a dramatic concert by Neue Volksoper Städtgen, featuring Birtwistle's vocal classmate A-Ronne (roughly translated as A R 2), with his hilarious sketches from burlesque to fury, from conventional singing to stifled laughter and theatrically and Sprechend A for soprano solo — a bewilderment, quiescent performance from Angélique Liou, serving up the music-acted as prose and vehicle. Scamozzi's *Albo della Fiore* (The World's Alibi) showed the composer's characteristic play with inhibition, often on the threshold between breath and singing. In his solo piano concert, the fine young British pianist Nicholas Hodges made sense of Stockhausen's 1987 *Klavierstück VII*, apparently unintelligible to its original performers — this was its UK premiere — and Brian Ferneyhough's *Opus Comes Nativum* with its absolute operatic poise. But Peter Alving's *Waves And Pans*, featuring repeated use of the famous, remained hard to fathom, even though the composer at the moving disk seemed to find it amusing. □

justice yidham & the
dynamic ribbon device
(the artist formerly known
as smallbook)
(dualplover australis)
world tour 03/04
europe leg
bristol dec 19th
amsterdam saturday jan 3rd
swolle friday jan 9th
rotterdam saturday jan 10th
antwerp saturday jan 11th
paris monday 12th
paris tuesday 13th
brussels saturday jan 15th
michoud friday jan 16th
brussels saturday jan 17th
lisbon monday jan 19th
vienna wednesday jan 21st
maribor friday jan 23rd
graz saturday jan 24th
rostock wednesday jan 28th
berlin thursday jan 29th
wrocław friday jan 30th
hristiava saturday jan 31st
belgrade monday feb 2nd
istanbul thursday feb 5th
berlin saturday feb 7th feb
a more yha - - -
(will perform for food)
www.dualplover.com

Jan 04 **The Spitz.co.uk**
- New Opening Times 7pm -

Fri 9 Jan
Byron Wallen



Acclaimed trumpeter Wallen
who won in the Innovation
category of the 2003 BBC Jazz
Awards playing from his new
album "Meeting Time",
£8.

Fri 16 Jan
Skatronic
with Sweet Monk £6

Sat 17 Jan
Yuh Nakano & Now +
Miso Soup + Lambent +
Kev Hopper



Multi-faceted, multi-national
(UK & Japan) experimental
performers Yuh Nakano and
Now create audio-ripples of
acoustic electronics. Berlin-
based Lambent plays
electric hip hop music,
making innovative use of two
samplers with special guest
artist, photographer and laptop
musician Kev Hopper £6

Fri 23 Jan
Seed Records featuring
Posthuman, Ardisson,
Digilanal, [snrych] +
Doubtful Guest
£7

Tue 27 Jan
Electrelane

Sat 31 Jan
Digression Sessions

Future jazz, hip-hop and broken
beats. £10

The Spitz 109 Commercial Str El
box office & info 020 7392 9032

SERIOUS into 2004

e.s.t.

ESBJORN SVENSSON TRIO
Seven Days of Falling Tour

UK tour after London sell out show - "they are
not about to become Europe's most thrilling
jazz performers, they already are". Jazzwise.

Thu 20 Jan BRISTOL St Georges 0117 923 0359
Sat 31 Jan SOUTHAMPTON Turner Sims 023 8050 5151
Sun 1 Feb GLASGOW Celtic Connections 0141 353 8811
Mon 2 Feb CAMBRIDGE Corn Exchange 01223 357851
Tue 3 Feb BRIGHTON Dome 01273 709709 double bill with Andy Sheppard & John Paterson
Wed 4 Feb MANCHESTER RNCM 0161 907 5555
Thu 5 Feb COVENTRY Warwick Arts Centre 02476 524 324
Fri 6 Feb BUXTON Opera House 0845 12 72190 double bill with Andy Sheppard & John Paterson
Sat 7 Feb POOLE Lighthouse 01202 685 222 double bill with Andy Sheppard & John Paterson

CD *Seven Days of Falling* (AC) out now

TOMASZ
STANKO
QUARTET

New CD 'Suspended Night' from ECM
trumpeter who creates music that is
"crisp, subtle and magically lyrical"
- Jazz Review.

Thu 19 Feb BRISTOL St Georges 0117 923 0359
Fri 20 Feb MANCHESTER RNCM 0161 907 5555
Sat 21 Feb BIRMINGHAM GSO 0121 750 3333
Mon 23 Feb CAMBRIDGE Corn Exchange 01223 357851
Tue 24 Feb LONDON Queen Elizabeth Hall 020 7060 4242
Wed 25 Feb LEEDS Warehouse 0113 245 6579
Thu 26 Feb SOUTHAMPTON Turner Sims 023 8050 5151
Fri 27 Feb EDINBURGH Queens Hall 0131 668 2019

PIAZZOLLA FOREVER
- THE SOUL OF TANGO

RICHARD
GALLIANO
SEPTET

"Astor Piazzolla's music and Richard
Galliano's virtuosity - a marriage
made in heaven" - Jazzwise.

Thu 18 Mar BRISTOL St Georges
0117 923 0359
Fri 12 Mar MANCHESTER RNCM
0161 907 5555
Sat 13 Mar LONDON Barbican
020 7638 8851
Tue 16 Mar CAMBRIDGE Corn Exchange
01223 357851

www.serious.org.uk

Royal Festival Hall

Queen Elizabeth Hall
Purcell Room



THE MAGIC BAND CAPTAIN BEEFHEART'S LEGENDARY MUSICIANS + THE FALL

Fri 23 Jan 2004 Royal Festival Hall 8pm

The Magic Band play tribute to Captain Beefheart.

John 'Drumbo' French: drums and vocals

Mark 'Rockette Morton' Boston: bass Gary 'Mantis' Lucas
and Denny 'Feelers Reese' Walley: guitars.

Co-headliners, The Fall are simply the most significant UK indie band
ever. Just ask Mark E Smith.



FROM 'STANDING IN THE SHADOWS OF MOTOWN'

THE FUNK BROTHERS

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

ISAAC HAYES & STEVE WINWOOD

Fri 30 Jan 2004 Royal Festival Hall 8pm

They played on more No. 1 records than The Beatles, The Beach
Boys, The Rolling Stones, and Elvis Presley combined and were
the greatest hit machine of Motown classics in the history of
recorded music. Get ready to put the faces to the music that
introduced these heroic musical figures to the world.



DAVID BYRNE

Thu 8 & Fri 9 Apr 2004 Royal Festival Hall 8pm

David Byrne, Talking Heads co-founder performs songs from his
new release together with new pieces from his previous solo
release 'Look Into The Eyeball' and Talking Heads classics.

Featuring Paul Frazier and Mauro Refosco and the six-piece
Tessa string ensemble from Austin Texas.

ether⁰⁴

FRI 12 MAR RFH 7.30PM
AFTER WARPCORPS
SELL-OUT 2003

LONDON SINFONETTA
SQUAREPUSHER
JAMIE LIDELL

PERFORM
GEORGES ANTHEIL
APHEX TWIN
JAMIE LIDELL
JOHN CAGE
STEVE REICH
SQUAREPUSHER
& EDGAR VARESE

LIVE PERFORMANCES BY
SQUAREPUSHER &
JAMIE LIDELL, SPECIALLY
SELECTED VIDEOS FROM
WARPCORPS, CHRIS CUNNINGHAM
& MUCH MORE.

WIRE TENSIO
LOVE Sufolk

SAT 6 MAR RFH 8PM

PURGATORIO:
TANGERINE DREAM

PERFORM
LIVE SOUNDTRACK TO:
DANTE'S INFERNO (1911)

WED 17 MAR RFH 8PM

DAVID AXELROD
& THE ORCHESTRA

SUN 7 MAR QEH 7.45PM

PLAID

THU 18 MAR RFH 8PM

KRAFTWERK
SOLD OUT - RETURNS ONLY

WWW.RFH.ORG.UK/ETHER
T: 020 7960 4242



JAMIE LIDELL



TANGERINE DREAM



DAVID AXELROD



PLAID



KRAFTWERK

Box office 020 7960 4242

Book online www.rfh.org.uk



REAL AUDIO www.borderline-extra.de RE-AL AUDIO

The Wire
50 Records
Of The
Year 2003
(in collaboration with January 2004)

Strange Attractors
Audio House
(audio only)

will continue to show about
the Wire, the Wire, the Wire, the Wire
the Wire, the Wire, the Wire, the Wire
the Wire, the Wire, the Wire, the Wire

CHARLEMAGNE
PALESTINE
JANUARY 30-31
AT THE INSTANT SCHAVIERS
WWW.INSTANTSCHAVIERS.COM

presented by the Wire magazine

Borderline
Mask für Gengänger

www.borderline-extra.de

the TRACK & FIELD organisation presents

WINTER SPRINT

7th - 8th January - water rate theatre, London
new music from the TRACK & FIELD label
including performance from:

THE ESSEX GREEN... HERMAN DUNE
ST THOMAS... THE LADYBUG TRANSISTOR...
THE BROKEN FAMILY BAND... KICKER...
FISHING SCHOOL... THE LOVES...
JAMES WILLIAM WINDLE... THE PROJECTS...
TOMPAULIN... HOMESICE

check www.trackandfield.org.uk
for ticketing information

*The Lounge
of
Pleasure
@Cargo*

Tuesday Jan 6th 8pm-1am
Celebrate new year with a free, exotic,
electronic, new breed event
all donations go to Resonance104.4fm
Live on stage: Voltage • BJ Cole
+ Resonance 104.4FM DJs
Jim Backhouse
Maggie Hall
Jonny Trunk
El Minko Pellegrino
And special guests

Don't
get
mad
with
the music industry
GET HEARD!
Get more exposure, find and build
a fan base & put your music in
front of the people that matter!

DemoTapeOnline.com

all Ears
15-18 JANUARY
OSLO

JAAP BLONK
EMI MAEDA
PETER BRÖTZMANN
HILD SOFIE TAPJORD
AXEL DÖRNER
LOTTA MELIN
PAT THOMAS
AND MORE!!!
WWW.ALL-EARS.NO

KRAFTWERK

STUDIO & COLLABORANTS

TUESDAY 16 MARCH 2004
BOXES 4 days
EXTRA SHOW ON STAGE 2 days
NO SUPPORT

WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH 2004
BOXES 3 days
EXTRA SHOW ON STAGE 4 days
NO SUPPORT

THURSDAY 18 MARCH 2004
BOXES ON THE SOUTH BANK GROUND
PART OF THE GREAT ESCAPE
BOXES 3 days
EXTRA SHOW ON STAGE 4 days
NO SUPPORT

FRIDAY 19 MARCH 2004
BOXES 4 days
EXTRA SHOW ON STAGE 4 days
NO SUPPORT

SATURDAY 20 MARCH 2004
BOXES 4 days
EXTRA SHOW ON STAGE 4 days
NO SUPPORT

GLASGOW ACADEMY
BOX OFFICE 020 771 2005
WATKINS 0971 220 0260 > www.watkins.co.uk

MANCHESTER APOLLO
BOX OFFICE 020 460 8300
POCKETILL 0161 930 1311
WATKINS 0971 220 0260 > www.watkins.co.uk

LONDON ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL
BOX OFFICE 020 7360 4242
www.rfh.org.uk

LONDON BRIXTON ACADEMY
BOX OFFICE 020 771 2005
STAN GREEN 020 7724 9822 > www.stangreen.com
WATKINS 0971 220 0260 > www.watkins.co.uk

EXTRA SHOW ADDED
DATE LONDON SNOW
BOXES 4 days > EXTRA SHOW ON STAGE 4 days
CONTENT 2 days > NO SUPPORT

A STADIUM PRESENTATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH WILSON SEATERS

sound is more
than music.

At the School of the
Art Institute of Chicago
you can:

Create audio installations
Design and build hardware, software, and instruments
Integrate sound into video,
film, performance art, and
web-based art.
Experiment with distribution
and broadcast technologies
Record and produce
Compose music in limitless genres.
improvise

Study with a diverse faculty supported by rich visiting artist
program, within a top-rated art school that emphasizes
interdisciplinary work.

THE SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
37 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603-3103
312.899.5219 • fax: 312.899.1840
www.artic.edu/saic • admiss@artic.edu

Resonance104.4fm

Out There

This month's selected festivals, live events, clubs and broadcasts.

Send info to *The Wire*, 2nd Floor East, 88-94 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA, UK

Fax +44 (0)20 7422 5011, listings@thewire.co.uk. Compiled by Phil England



John Cage feted at Uncaaged

UK festivals

JOHN CAGE UNCAAGED LONDON

Jam-packed weekend celebrating the life and work of John Cage. Presented by The BBC Symphony Orchestra, the weekend features five major concerts with works by Cage, his contemporaries and influences, as well as films, talks and a large-scale Muscorious happening. The concert programme features Cage's *7th Season* and *4'33"* plus work by Henry Cowell, Charles Ives and Aaron Copland (Barbican Hall, 16 January, 7.30pm), a piano recital featuring Cage's *Solo For Piano* as well as work by Morton Feldman, Christian Wolff and Arnold Schoenberg (St Giles Cripplegate, 16, 10pm); The Quire Quartet performing *String Quartet in Four Parts* and *Four* alongside traditional Japanese music for shakuhachi (St Giles Cripplegate, 17, 1pm); and an overnight performance of Erik Satie's *Voixes* which can last up to 24 hours (Barbican Conservatory, 17, starts 6pm). Students from the Guildhall perform Cage's *First Construction in Metal*, *La Monte Young's Aeon For Chorus, Bells, and Other Sound Sources*, a tape playback of David Tudor's *Rainforest* and works by Peter Garland and Henry Cowell (Barbican Hall, 17, 10.15pm); London Symphony Chorus perform religious song

simultaneously with selections from Cage's *Sonatas And Interludes* for prepared piano, and there is a world premiere of Cage's *Notations I* for Stephen Montague (St Lukes, 18, 1.30pm). London Sinfonietta play works by New York School composers including Cage's *Concerto For Prepared Piano and Apartment House 1776* plus works by Feldman, Wolff and Christian Brown (Barbican Hall, 18, 4pm); and the weekend concludes with 101 orchestra members playing Cage's *101* in a concert that also includes Morton Feldman's *Oello And Orchestra* and Lou Harrison's *Symphony No 4 - 1st Movement* (Barbican Hall, 18, 8pm). The Muscorious happenings feature many simultaneous performances across the public spaces of the Barbican Centre including performances of Cage works as well as traditional music, an appearance by former Led Zepplin bassist John Paul Jones, and visual interventions by sculptor Kathy Hinde (17, 3pm and 5pm). London Barbican, 16-18 January, 020 7638 8891, www.barbican.co.uk

International festivals

ALL EARS NORWAY

Jazz and improvised music festival featuring,

among others, Paul Nilssen-Love (7 January), Jaap Blonk, Maja Radke, Inger Zach and Paul Rutherford (15), Iker Goienetxe, Peter Bidsman and Nilssen-Love (16), Axel Dörner, Paul Lovens, Pat Thomas and Bötzmann (17), and improvised music to films by Emil Maeda, Tommy Karanen and others (18). Oslo venues venues, 7-17 January, 00 47 92859979/22209181, www.all-ears.no

CLUB TRANSMEDIALE.04 GERMANY

The fourth annual festival for electronic music and related visual arts, which is once again being supported by The Wire, has a packed line-up of edgy electronica, including Bino Thurner, The Jags, Thomas Köner, Kevin Saizem, Fennesz, Phil Molek, Katie Matthews, Nitzer, Loebketter John, Schneider TM, Gonna Semmer, Microstoria/Rose Barea, Mike Paradinas, AGE Safety Socks, Choko On Speed, Felix Kubin and Angela Bulloch among many others. Alongside the performances there's a parallel programme of video screenings, panel discussions and talks. Berlin Mains are offer, 30 January-7 February, 00 49 30 4404 1852, www.clubtransmediale.de

NETIMAGE 04 ITALY

Fourth edition of this Italian festival includes workshops and conferences on various aspects

of digital art and media, plus live performances by Kim Cascone, Kontakt Org Dingfrige (Thomas Koenig and Asma Tschern), Ruchensystem, Scanner, [The User] and more. Bologna various venues, 21-24 January, 00 39 51 331099, www.netimage.it

Special events

INSTANTS CHAVIRÉS: CHARLEMAGNE PALESTINE FRANCE

The Wire continues its relationship with the Paris experimental music venue by co-presenting two concerts this month by the great minimalist pianist and composer Paris Instants Chavirés.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF ESEMPLASTIC ZAPPOLOGY UK

Informal anti-conference hosted by The Wire writer Ben Watson with Frank Zappaophiles and experts from around the globe presenting papers. The conference will be followed by evening entertainment from improvisers and DJs. London Theatre Technica, 16 January, 10pm-5pm, 020 7388 8679, www.milankostofski.co.uk

RESONANCE 100.4 FM UK > THE WORLD

New Year's Eve on the London Musicians

Collective's arts radio station features a 24 hour review of the year's highlights chosen by the station's regular programme makers, and also includes special seasonal works from performers in London and New York put together by Mick Hobbs. Later in the month, there's an eight hour headbanging special hosted by Aphasic, DJ Sosa, Bong-Ra and The Hedkutz Sound System (17 January, midnight) and the following morning). Ongoing schedule highlights include The Wire's *Adventures In Modern Music* (Thursdays, 8-10pm) and shows by Wire contributors Ben Watson (Wednesdays, 2pm), Savage Planet (Tuesdays, 5pm), Mike Barnes (alternate Tuesdays, 8-10pm) and Dave Mendi (Thursdays, 3-5pm). Other regular specialist shows include *It's Black Music* (Tuesdays, noon), teenage DIY wonder *Hellbore Show* (Wednesdays, 3-5pm), Simon Russell of Rough Trade Shops (Thursdays, noon), *The Traditional Music Hour* with Reg Hall and friends (Thursdays, 2pm), *Cultural Connections* (London Gapspace (Thursdays, 6pm), *Bailing The Jack* - Blues Roots And Shoos (Fridays, 3pm), Peter Cusack's *Vermilion Sounds* field recordings show (alternate Fridays, 8-10pm), *Nostalgia To Afrika* Congolese music show (Saturdays, 1-3pm), Caroline Kraabel's *Taking A Life For A Walk* (Saturdays, 1pm), *Harrison E. Phelayer's* surrealist soap operas (Saturdays 8-10pm and Thursdays 4-6pm) and *Turntable Radio* (Sundays, 10pm). Broadcasts across Central London noon-1am serves days a week with repeats broadcast outside these times. Full stereo Web streaming and full listings at www.thesheedsheeds.com

On Stage

CEREK BAILEY

The legendary improvising guitarist performs works from his new *Poetry & Playing* album. London Poetry Cafe, 18 January, 7pm, 020 7420 9887

THE MAGIC BANO

New Van Wert vets - including Gary Lucas and John French - review guest works from the Captain's canon. London Royal Festival Hall (23 January) and Edinburgh Liquid Room (24). www.beeheart.com

WAYNE SHORTER'S FOOTPRINTS

Former Miles Davis and Weather Report saxophonist performs with his acoustic quartet (26 January) and with acoustic quartet and orchestra (29). London Barbican Hall, £27.50-£14, (020) 7638 8891, www.barbican.org.uk

TY

Ninja Tune/Big Dada rapper in residence with full band. London Jazz Cafe, 9, 18, 23 & 30 January. 020 7518 6060, www.jazzcafe.co.uk

VVM

The satirical butchers of pop supported by Dressed In Wires, Jazzyfingers, Die Clattschenschneiderin and The Broom Old Abraham Soundsystem. Newcastle up a Tyne The Clung, 24 January, 7.30pm-late, £5, 0191 230 4474, www.broomwashed.com/vvm

Club spaces

AMPELOPSIS OLANULOSA

BREVIPUNCTULATA ELEGANS

This month's name for the Bohnan Brothers' Impor and beyond weekly Haidy and Charming Hostess (5 January), Pascal Marzan & Steve

Benefsted, UKS and Gave Bell & Kiku Day (12), Eric Rocco Group, Fyle Hutchins, Sandy Khensness and Dominic Lash & Paul May (19), OM & Neil Robinson, Richard Sanderson and The Bohnan Brothers (26). London Saxonington Centre, 8pm, £4, £3, 07904 087 409

THE BLACK POOGL

Album launch for the White Rabbit who promise 'hardcore and intricate electronics combined with new spinning visuals'. London The Foundry, 17 January, 8-11pm, free, www.newtong.org

BOAT TING

Improvised and experimental music and poetry monthly based on a boat on the Thames and this month featuring saxophone-heavy female quintet Blow Cozy, Mono, the duo of improvising drummer Mark Sanders and Phil Dancart on voice and electronics, songs and improvisations from saxophone trio The Ramble Viewers; plus poetry and song from Mary Parker, and unaccompanied poetry from Amy Hansen. London The North Club, 26 January, 7pm, £5/£2.50, 020 8670 5094, www.boat-ting.com

THE CONSORTIUM CORRUPTIVE

Bournemouth's regular all music space plays host to DJ Vadim's Russian Persecution with Yash Bravo and DJ First Rate plus support from Jabba The Hut and Greg Vulgar. Bournemouth The Consortium Bar, 18 January, 9pm-1am, £10-£8, 01202 555155

HIVE

New monthly electronic music event for Souasters. This month features performances by locals Alexander Wendt, Mith and Oshu No Denki. Liverpool FACT, 27 January, 7-11pm, £3-£2, 0151 707 4470, www.fact.co.uk

HYBRIDITY

DJ F mixes urban jungle and experimental North African and Middle Eastern beats with dub, modern classical and drum 'n' bass with help from Egyptian percussionist Dula Dae Dancer. London Cafe 1001, 7 & 27 January, 6-10.30pm, free, 020 7267 9679, d@theeels.com

THE LOUNGE OF PLEASURE

New Year's celebration and benefit night for Resonance 104.4FM, featuring live music from rock improvisers Voltage and weed guitarist DJ Cole plus DJs Jim Bashkine, Magr Hall and Jerry Thrink. London Cargo, 6 January, 8pm-1am, 020 7739 3440, www.cargotheatre.co.uk

SPIRIT OF GRAVITY

Electronics night featuring electro-horse outfit The Beowulf Cluster from Berlin, Saracen Blue Lampshade and Neo-Wyeko plus resident DJs and Electrochance. Brighton Freebust, 27 January, £3-£2, 8-10pm, 01273 603974, www.spiritofgravity.com

THE SPITZ

Live music at this trusty East End venue includes cross-cultural political song from US female vocal the Charming Hostess (7 January); jazz trumpet Byron Bolton (8); leftfield and improvising curiosities Niki Nakano & Now, Kev Hopper, Miss Soap and Lambert (17); Seed Records night with live electronic music from Posthuman, Adson, Digitalist, [mynosh] and The Doubtful (23); and Brighton's excellent post-rock unit Elektroline (27). 020 7392 9032, www.thespitz.co.uk

SPRAWL

Diverse digital music monthly Manchester's Disco Operating System: the profile illuminati and laptop improviser Bee Drow play live, plus Markus from the Staubgild label DJs along with

PERFORM MUSIC BY

**JOHN ZORN TOEK NUMAN
RICHARD AYRES JOHN DE SIMONE**

AN ENTICING SNAPSHOT OF CURRENT NEW MUSIC, FEATURING THE FIRST UK APPEARANCE OF THE **OCTACHORD**, AN EXTRAORDINARY NEW INSTRUMENT.

ON TOUR SPRING 2004

Sat 28 FEB
LONDON Purcell Room
020 7960 4242
www.rfh.org.uk

Sun 29 FEB
EXETER Phoenix
01392 667080
www.exeterphoenix.org.uk

Tue 2 MAR
SOUTHAMPTON Turner Sims
023 8059 5151
www.turnersims.co.uk

Wed 3 MAR
BRAWBY The Shed
01653 668494
www.theshed.co.uk

Thu 4 MAR
LEEDS The Venue
0113 222 3434
www.fuseleeds.org.uk

www.cmntours.org.uk

the best in contemporary music on tour

THE LARKIN COMPANY

WIRE

THE LARKIN COMPANY

Out There

club residents. **London** The Lighthouse, 14 January. 7.30pm-midnight, £6-£3, 020 7291 8787, www.theluce.com/sprawl

STERIOD ABUSE VS MUTANT DISCO
Camwell and Exotic of soundcloud featuring Ruff Screamers and Rhythm Doctor. **London** Herbel, 30 January 8.30pm-2am, free-£6 depending on entrance time, 020 7613 4462, www.herbel.co.uk

TRIBAL SESSIONS
Invited DJs and live acts. The Spoke and Quantum Project's Lifesaves play live. **Manchester** Sankley's Soap, 23 January, 0161 661 9688

816
Music and arts collective present live music and visuals, including laptop sets from im and Orphan, an acoustic set by Scamone of The Niciant Quartet and a performance of found sounds, uteruli and instruments processed live by Petron. **London** 291 Gallery, 21 January. 7.30pm-midnight, free, 020 7613 5676, www.816.co.uk

Incoming

HORACE ANDY
UK
The sweetest voice in reggae. **London** Jazz Café, 1-4 April, 020 7344 0044

ATP: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT #1
UK
Seaside festival curated by Magaw, Tortoise and Skivvies. Other performers include Boredoms, Cat Power, Yams, Am, Mike Watt & The Secondmen, Mike Watt's Tom and Jerry Show, Broadcast, Part Chimp, Ise and more to be confirmed. **Cambridge** Sands Holiday Centre, 26-28 March, £110 includes chair, accommodation, 020 7734 8932, www.atpfestival.com

ATP: THE DIRECTOR'S CUT #2
UK
Second weekend festival by the sea, this one

curated by Sonic Youth and Steven Matusz & The Jicks. Other performers include Gehef, VibesoftheAncestors, Jackie-O Motherfucker, 01000, Enase Enade, Bardo Pond, Modest Mouse, The Shins, Mylo's Flashlight, Fursua, Sophia, Thersedy Unearthly, The Nabew, Her Mar Supersar, Double Leopards, Cass McCombs and others to be confirmed. **Cambridge** Sands Holiday Centre, 2-4 April, £110 includes chair, accommodation, 020 7734 8932, www.atpfestival.com

THE BLACK RIDER
UK
English language version of the Robert Wilson production combining text by William Burroughs and music by Tom Waits and Greg Cohen. **London** Barbican, 17 May-12 June, 7-45pm, 020 7638 4441, www.barbican.org.uk

EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN
UK
German industrialists play European capitals including London, 291, 3 April and Dublin Temple Bar (4), www.einsturzen.org

BILL FRISSELL & DELIMADIA TOUNKARA
UK
US guitarist teams up with Malian Super Rail Band guitarist Olympe Tounkara on a Contemporary Music Network tour supported by The Wire. **Birmingham** 29/28 February, **London** Barbican (29), **Birmingham** CBSO Centre (1 March), **Newcastle** Opera House (3), **Leeds** West Yorkshire Playhouse (4), **Cardiff** Gwent Centre (4), **Brighton** Dome (10) and **Bristol** Colston Hall (7), www.cmntours.org.uk

KRAFTWERK UK & IRELAND
UK/Ireland
Kraftwerk's first tour in 12 years, riding on the back of their *Rain of France* Soundtracks album **Dublin** Olympia Theatre (15 March), **Glasgow** Academy (16), **Manchester** Apollo (17), **London** Royal Festival Hall (18) and **Bristol** Academy (20)

MONDRIAN QUARTET
UK
The Amsterdam based string quartet perform works by John Zorn and world premieres by Tosh Numan, John de Simone and Richard Ayres on a Contemporary Music Network tour supported by The Wire. **London** Purcell Room (28 February), **Dexter Phoenix** (29), **Southampton** Turner Sims (3 March) and **Bristol** The Shed (3), www.cmntours.org.uk

BOBBY PREVITE'S THE 23 CONSTELLATIONS OF JOAN MIRO
UK
US jazz drummer's large-scale composition fronts a backdrop of Miro's constellation paintings. Previte also performs in a trio with guitarist Charlie Hunter and DJ Logic. **A Contemporary Music Network** tour supported by The Wire. **London** Queen Elizabeth Hall (3 February), **Leeds** College of Music (4), **Gateshead** Caudwell Hall (5), **Birmingham** CBSO Centre (6), **Cheltenham** St Andrews Church (7), **Southampton** Turner Sims Hall (8) and **Bristol** St George's Hall (9), www.cmntours.org.uk

NOBUKAZU TAKEMURA'S CHILD'S VIEW ENSEMBLE
UK
Prolific Japanese electronics composer and multi-media artist on his debut UK tour with a group featuring members of Isotope 217 and Wilco, plus vocalist Ai Tsuyuko who also provides computer generated visuals. **Another Contemporary Music Network** tour supported by The Wire. **Bath** Michael Tippett Centre (4 February), **Dexter Phoenix** (5), **Brighton** Old Market (6), **London** Union Chapel (7), **Nottingham** Rescue Rooms (10), **Leeds** Warehouse (11) and **Glasgow** CCA (12), www.cmntours.org.uk

PEACE NOT WAR
UK
Four packed evenings on two stages put together by the compilers of the Peace Not War

compilation CDs to raise money for anti-war activists. The four evenings will be themed by genre and confirmed acts include Fun-O-Mental, Cross (with Coldcut), Asien Dub Foundation Sound System, Conflict, Alabama 3, Of Onomatopoeia, Fatless, Howe & Lamb, Rottenstein, Slow and The Unpeople. There will be a third room for films and workshops. **London** Ocean, 12-15 February, £17.50 plus booking fee per night, www.peace-not-war.org, www.ocean.org.uk

SUBCURRENT
UK
Curated by Wire writer David Keenan, this three day festival focuses on the use of electronics in various outdoor settings, from improv to drone works, noise and sound art. **Performances** include Nobukazu Takekura (12 February), Jim Sauter & Robert Moulton and Maseena (13), Space Machines, Double Leopards and Konstantin Gerschlager (14), **Glasgow** CCA, www.subcurrent.com

THROBBING GRISTLE
UK
Genesis, Chris, Casey and Slazey reform for a one-off festival celebrating 'Industrial music in the 21st century' featuring Coil, Pan Sonic, Matmos, Lydia Lunch, Alac Ergut, Jim O'Rourke, Mege Kig Iseon, Merbow, Richard H Kirk, Throbbing Gristle, Soft Pink Truth, WE, Big Bottom, People Like Us, Simon Fisher Turner and Project Dark. **Cambridge** Sands Pointers, 14-15 May, 0871 220 0266, www.throbbing-gristle.com

BRIAN WILSON PERFORMS SMILE
UK
Original Beach Boy returns once again to perform the legendary lost album. These are additional dates to the already sold out 20-24 February, **London** Royal Festival Hall, 26 & 27 February, 020 7950 4422, www.bwsc.org.uk

Out There Rooms for inclusion in the February issue should reach us by Monday 5 January

UK Radio

National

BBC RADIO 1 9-10 PM
JOHN PEEL
Sunday Thursday 10pm-midnight
Unfilled music across the board
GILLIES PETERSON
Thursday midnight-2am
Post-rock jazz
FABIO & GROOVERIDER
Saturday 1-3 am longwave drum 'n' bass
WESTWOOD RAP SHOW
Friday 9-11pm/Saturday 9pm-midnight
Hip-hop focus
REGGAE DANCEHALL NITE
Saturday midnight-2am. Rast culture

BBC RADIO 3 9-10 PM
LATE JUNCTION
Monday-Thursday 10-11pm
New Music compendium
JAZZ LEGENDS
Friday 1-5pm. Archive recordings

ANDY KERSHAW
Sunday 10.15-midnight. World Music
JAZZ ON 3
Friday 11.30pm-1am
Modern jazz in session and concert
WORLD ROUTES
Saturday 1-2am
Jazz Dorian presents a travelling of global music
JAZZ FILE
Saturday 6-8.30pm
Documentary magazine
HEAR AND NOW
Saturday 10.45pm-1am. New Music magazine
MIXING IT
Friday 10.15-11.30pm
Hyper-electric mix of avant sounds

Links to Net radio broadcasts can be found on The Wire Website. www.thewire.co.uk

Regional

BBC LANCASHIRE
95.5/103.9/104.5 FM, 855 MW
ON THE WIRE
Saturday 10pm-midnight. The Wire's club column
Steve Barker mixes it up wildlife
BBC MERSEYSIDE
96.8 FM, 1485 MW
PMS
Sunday midnight-2am. Free-wheeling mix of avant sounds
BBC SCOTLAND 92.4-94.7 FM
FROM BEBOP TO HIPHOP
Wednesday 7.15-9.05pm, Sunday 10.05pm-midnight. Jazz and its beats
CABLE RADIO 89.8 FM (MILTON KEYNES)
THE GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS
Friday 10pm-midnight. Eclectic event mix

JUICE 107.2 FM (BRIGHTON)
TOTALLY WIRED
Saturday 11pm-1am. Leftfield new music
KISS 100 FM (LONDON)
PATRICK FORGE
Sunday 1-3am. Eclectic jazz-and-jazz mix
MATT JAM LAMONT
Wednesday 2-4am. Beatnik science
LONDON LIVE 94.9 FM
CHARLIE GILLET
Saturday 8-10pm. World Music, roots and R&B
RANKIN MISS P. RIDDIMS & BLUES
Saturday 8-10pm. Strictly roots
RESONANCE 104.4 FM (LONDON)
Real alternative radio. Broadcasting across central London with live streaming at www.resonancefm.com (see Special Events)
XFM 104.9 FM (LONDON)
FLO-MOTION
Sunday 10pm-midnight. Leftfield electronics



Resonance 104.4fm

Supported by The Gas-House Trust

"It's the best radio station in London. Every day I hear something
that I never dreamt of hearing" Stewart Lee, The Guardian

"A brooding mix of the happily accessible and the ear-splittingly bizarre" Metro

"The coolest radio station in the UK... it's Utopia" Muzik

"An ad-free oasis of sonic experimentation and audio art" Dazed and Confused

"The strangest radio station in the world" The Richard and Judy Show



worldwide www.resonancefm.com

Now for New Year

- CD quality 128K web stream |

www.resonancefm.com

"A glorious experiment that everyone in the country deserves the chance to hear"
Nicholas Leypard, The Independent

Distributors

KEY: T = Tel F = fax

mail@basscast.com
Winer & Winer
 www.winerwiner.com
Webby Trail
 webby@winerwiner.com
World Circuit
 www.worldcircuit.co.uk
Your Record
 www.yourrecord.com

BMG
 Long Lane, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 7ST
 T 0121 553 9880
BMG Records
 Dacia House, 30 Duke Street,
 Manchester M1 2HW T 0161 238 3228
 F 0161 238 3051
 www.bmgrecords.com
Cadiz
 15 Kings Cheshire, Telford Road, London N9 9AH
 T 0207 481 9111 F 0207 481 9001

Cargo
 17 Heathfield Road, Pinner, Greater London SW18 4TD T 020 7751 8888
 info@cargo.co.uk
Chandos Records
 Chandos House, Commerce Way,
 Chalfont St Giles, Bucks HP8 4JN
 T 01296 882277 F 01296 882255
 www.chandos.co.uk

Cine
 The Children, Finchley Road,
 Chalfont St Giles, Bucks HP8 4JN
 T 01296 882277 F 01296 882255
Disco
 Benda Estate, Netherland Road, Deeside, Wrexham
 SH10 3AH T 01930 329550
 info@disco.co.uk

Disk Imports
 1st and 2nd Floors, 7 High Street
 Chichester, Chichester, PO1 1X
 T 01243 481 9055 F 01243 481 9488
 www.diskimports.co.uk
Disk Import
 T 020 7220 3337

EAG
 Haines Close, Tebbelands Park, Leamington Spa,
 Warwickshire CV34 8EP
 T 01926 456600
Entertainment Network
 Ribbles Lane, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 3BE
 T 01296 428151 F 01296 981099

Fiche
 PO Box 2940, Wilton, Essex CM9 3GA
 www.fiche.co.uk
Forced Exposure
 256 Lowell Street, Somerville, MA 02144, USA
 F 001 617 626 4791
 info@forcedexposure.com
 www.forcedexposure.com

Formic Brackets
 T 00 48 221 85 20 430
 F 00 48 221 85 20 431
 formic@formic.nl
Groyned
 138A Pough Road, London SW11 3AP
 F 020 7924 1471

Harmonia Mundi
 45 Vyner St, London E2 6DQ
 T 020 8500 8500 F 020 8500 9901
 www.harmoniamundi.com
Ideal
 Ground Floor Unit, 258 Vyner Street, London E2 6DQ
 T 020 8207 3660 F 020 8207 3588
 info@idealrecords.com
Imperial
 10 High Street, Stagmore Road, Isle of Lems,
 Ower, Hants RG2 0TS T 01870 810 809

Isle Star
 155 Acton Lane, Park Royal, London NW10 7NU
 T 020 8991 5818 F 020 8662 7003
Kale
 Claret House, Middlebury Road, Hadden Bridge,
 HX7 7AA T 01452 842312
Koch International
 Chantry House, 67 Little Ealing Lane, London W5 4TH
 F 020 8832 1613

Kudos
 79 Portico Road, London NW5 1AF T 020 7492 4555
 F 020 7492 4551
Loveland
 Haverhill, 6, D-2020 Antwerpen, Belgium
 T 00 31 3 238 70 08 F 00 31 3 238 15 27

Machine
 Sunset Brewery Building, Brick Lane, London E3 6GB
 F 020 7507 3441
Maple
 Claret House, City Centre, Ovington, Kent BR5 3RD
 F 01468 677691

Melrose
 Wyndham Lane, Wexmouth NR5 2PF T 01303 692119
Musique
 Claret House, City Centre, Ovington, Kent BR5 3RD
 F 01468 677691

Plastic Head/PHD
 Unit 15-15A, Island Business Estate, Haverhill,
 Wexmouth, Dorset DT9 1AD T 01303 692119
Priory
 T 01296 882255

Project Music
 The Powerhouse, Cocklet Lane, Beckenham, Kent
 BR5 1JF www.projectmusic.com
Real Recommended
 79 Brick Lane, Thurston Heath, Surrey CR7 8JG
 T 020 8771 3138 www.recommended.co.uk
Reverber
 235 18th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, USA
 F 001 415 341 2511 www.reverber.com

Sandwich Records
 www.sandwichrecords.com
Saga
 PO Box 10365, London N1 6ER
 info@saga.co.uk

Scott Butler
 Unit 3, Linsford Mews, London SE7 9AZ
 T 020 8558 9180 F 020 8283 5269
Select
 344 Haverhill Avenue, Reading, Surrey RH1 3BN
 T 01870 30300 F 01793 766516
Shedlock
 23A Colingwood Road, London N15 4FZ
 F 020 382 8140 info@shedlock.co.uk

Sony
 Robson Lane, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 3BX
 T 01296 428151 F 01296 481059
Sound 323
 329 Anthony Road, Highgate, London N6 5AA
 T 020 8418 9595
 sound323@aol.com
 www.sound323.com

These
 70 Lawrence Road, London N15 4FG
 T 020 9802 2552 www.these.com
Star 60
 T 020 754 332 3097 F 001 731 332 7907
 www.star60.com
Stems
 34 15 Wilton Street, London W1P 3PL
 T 020 7368 5834 F 020 7368 2756
 info@stemrecords.com

Star 60
 T 020 754 332 3097 F 001 731 332 7907
 www.star60.com
Stems
 34 15 Wilton Street, London W1P 3PL
 T 020 7368 5834 F 020 7368 2756
 info@stemrecords.com

Star 60
 T 020 754 332 3097 F 001 731 332 7907
 www.star60.com
Stems
 34 15 Wilton Street, London W1P 3PL
 T 020 7368 5834 F 020 7368 2756
 info@stemrecords.com

Star 60
 T 020 754 332 3097 F 001 731 332 7907
 www.star60.com
Stems
 34 15 Wilton Street, London W1P 3PL
 T 020 7368 5834 F 020 7368 2756
 info@stemrecords.com

Star 60
 T 020 754 332 3097 F 001 731 332 7907
 www.star60.com
Stems
 34 15 Wilton Street, London W1P 3PL
 T 020 7368 5834 F 020 7368 2756
 info@stemrecords.com

Star 60
 T 020 754 332 3097 F 001 731 332 7907
 www.star60.com
Stems
 34 15 Wilton Street, London W1P 3PL
 T 020 7368 5834 F 020 7368 2756
 info@stemrecords.com

ND Labels: if you spot an incorrect or missing listing here, please contact The Wire

ND Distributors: if you spot an incorrect or missing listing here, please contact The Wire

Label Lore

No: 088 Ghostly International/
Spectral Sound

Address
 202 E Washington #510
 Ann Arbor, MI 48104
 Tel (+1) 734 623 0077
 Fax (+1) 734 623 7007
 info@ghostly.com
 www.ghostly.com

Run By
 Sam Votaw IV

Distribution
 US: Forced Exposure/Caroline

UK Cargo
 Benelux: Lowlands
 France: Discrepancy
 Germany: Zomba/Reinhold

Roster Includes
 Dabrye, Matthew Dear, Dykehouse, Kid Memory
 Gash, Kim, Lashara, Charles Marner, Midwest
 Product, Osborne, Solvent, Tadi Mulina and
 Twine. Plus newcomers: Aero, Audion, Cepso,
 Homophonic Being.

Brief History

Started in 1990 in Votaw's dorm room while studying Art History at the University of Michigan. A DJ since the age of 15, Votaw (DJ Spectrograph, at the time), had a chance encounter with Matthew Dear at a college party. The idea for a different brand of American label, which echoed the engaging visual elements of 4AD and Mo'W was with a diverse electronic catalogue were set. A meeting with local musician, Tadi Mulina (aka Dabrye, James Conto, BK3) yielded a techno demo, the flipside of which contained the freestyle DJ of Mulina's debut, Winking Machine. The fate of the diverse label was sealed.

Statement of Intent
 To release striking, humanistic music in the electronic and electronic-hybrid canon. To position the label as a gallery or institution, able to showcase different projects and styles while retaining a consistency, focus and high artistic standards.

Other activities
 Emphasis on live events in both Detroit and international cities as well as yearly showcases. Emphasis on promoting the visual arts through collaboration with contemporary artists (Christine Chubbuck (Dewitt), Michael Segal, Kristine Russell, etc.).

Future plans
 Furthering full-lengths from Matthew Dear, Twine, Midwest Product and Dykehouse in store, as well as the long-awaited Dabrye "Two/Three" LP. 2004 will push the new sound of GASH, focusing on a return to sensuality in machine music. 2004 will also bring the Spirit Tons series, a 10 part 12" series of tapes in the form of abstracts, lyrics, dance and images. More US and European tours for all Ghostly artists, stay tuned for our site.

Choice cuts
 Winking - Side of the Moon (The Moon Cotton) - Buck!

Subscribe

Subscribing to *The Wire* is the best way to get hold of copies of "the most essential music magazine of the contemporary era" (Forced Exposure)

It's a fact: the most exciting and influential developments in music are happening at the fringes of the culture, off the radar of most entrenched music magazines. Unlike other zines, *The Wire* is uncompromising in its mission to dig out the music that really matters, music that makes a difference. Each issue is filled with in-depth coverage of the most radical and innovative musicians (past and present) in the arenas of electronic music, avant rock, HipHop, new jazz, noise, modern composition, traditional musics and beyond. You won't find this kind of informed mix anywhere else. Don't be without it.

Subscribe to *The Wire* and get these benefits

Save money

Wherever you live, a subscription issue will still cost less than if you bought it from a news stand, record store or book shop

Prompt delivery

You receive copies of the magazine by direct mail.
Delivery schedule: UK: 3-5 days, Europe/USA/ROW: 1-3 weeks,
ROW surface: 4-12 weeks. NB: US subscription copies are mailed in the US

Free CDs or free extra issues

All new subscribers worldwide receive free introductory CDs or free extra issues (see opposite for details)

The Wire Tapper CDs

All subscribers worldwide receive future volumes in *The Wire Tapper* series (see opposite page for details)

More free CDs

In addition to *The Wire Tapper* series, all subscribers automatically receive copies of all CDs given away with the magazine (see opposite page for details)

Special discounts

All subscribers get discounts on back issue orders (see page 101).
Wire merchandise, and mail order offers on selected CDs and music books

Subscription options

One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
The Wire Tapper Volumes 1-4

One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
The Wire Tapper Volumes 5-7

One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
The Wire Tapper Volumes 7-9

One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
The Wire Tapper Volumes 9 & 10

One year's subscription (12 issues) plus
2 extra issues free

With this option your subscription runs for 14 issues instead of the usual 12



k lssu

A fully searchable index of issues 100-203 is available at www.thewire.co.uk

The site includes downloadable articles from sold out issues

[illegible]

Issues that are not listed here are sold out. Issue numbers not in bold indicate few issues remaining. For further enquiries call +44 (0)20 7422 5022 or email sales@thewire.co.uk



When ordering back issues, subscribers can get copies of the following CDs – free



To get a copy of the relevant CD when ordering the relevant back issue, quote your subscription number on the form below. You'll find your number on the contact sheet that comes with your copy of the magazine each month. If you can't find it, call +44 (0)20 7422 5022 or email subs@thewire.co.uk. NB These CDs are only available to subscribers

The Wire Tapper 1 (available with issue 177)
The Wire Tapper 2 (available with issue 177)
The Wire Tapper 3 (available with issue 182)
The Wire Tapper 4 (available with issue 184)
The Wire Tapper 5 (available with issue 193)
The Wire Tapper 6 (contact The Wire for availability)
The Wire Tapper 7 (available with issue 207)
The Wire Tapper 8 (contact The Wire for availability)
The Wire Tapper 9 (available with issue 220)
The Wire Tapper 10 (available with issue 235)
Virgin sampler (available with issue 152)
Live & Direct 99 (available with issue 187)
Domino On The Wire (available with issue 169)
Evian Parker's High Tide CD-ROM (available with issue 195)
Malcolm's Draw Me A Riot (available with issue 204)

Runeology (available with issue 211)
Exploratory Music From Portugal (available with issue 212)
Stealgood (available with issue 213)
Tigerbats: And The Beat Goes On! (available with issue 220)
Faith & Power: An ESP-Disk Sampler (available with issue 221)
Klangbad: First Steps (available with issue 222)
Ford Focus (available with issue 224)
Club Transmediale 03 (available with issue 228)
A Snapshot From The 2003 Domino Festival (available with issue 229)
-Scape Showcase (available with issue 230)
Market 03 (available with issue 237)
Raster-Noton, Archive 1 (available with issue 238)

Order form for subscriptions and/or back issues. Or order online at www.thewire.co.uk

Subscription rates (12 issues)

UK ☐ £36 Europe ☐ Air £50 USA & Canada ☐ Air US\$95/£50

Rest of the World ☐ Air £89/US\$100 Surface £50/US\$85

Issue you wish your subscription to start with (month)

Subscription options (see page 98 for details)

- ☐ **Option 1:** One year's subscription + The Wire Tapper Vols 1-4
☐ **Option 2:** One year's subscription + The Wire Tapper Vols 5-7
☐ **Option 3:** One year's subscription + The Wire Tapper Vols 7-9
☐ **Option 4:** One year's subscription + The Wire Tapper Vols 9 & 10
☐ **Option 5:** One year's subscription + two extra issues

NO free time CDs will be sent separately to your first issue ☐ Tick here if you are renewing your subscription

Your details

☐ I am a subscriber My number (if known) is: _____ /TW

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode/Zip _____

Country _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Subscription total £/US\$ _____

Back issues total £/US\$ _____

T-shirts total £/US\$ _____

Grand total £/US\$ _____

☐ I enclose a cheque/money order made payable to THE WIRE for £/US\$ _____

☐ Please charge my ☐ Mastercard ☐ Amex ☐ Visa/Debit ☐ Switch for £/US\$ _____

Card No.

For Switch cards please supply the longest, ie 16 or 18 digit number

Expiry Date: / / Switch Card Issue No: / Switch Card Valid From Date: /

Please supply cardholder's name and address if different from above

Signature _____

Date: / /

☐ Please tick here if you would prefer not to receive unsolicited offers from acceptable organisations

Order back issues here

Price per copy including postage & packing

UK ☐ £4 Europe ☐ Air £5 USA/Rest of the World ☐ Air £9/US\$10 Surface £5/US\$6.50

Subscriber discount save £1/\$1.50 per copy when you order three or more back issues

Please send me issue numbers:

Please give alternatives in case these are unavailable

Order T-shirts here

Price per T-shirt including postage & packing

Standard T-shirt

UK ☐ £14 UK subscribers ☐ £12 Overseas ☐ £16/US\$27 Overseas subscribers ☐ £14/US\$24


Number of shirts required Extra Large Large Medium

Return this page (or a copy) to:

The Wire 2nd Floor East, 88-94 Westworld St, FREEPOST LON18589 London E1 7BR UK
 Tel: +44 (0)20 7422 5022 Fax: +44 (0)20 7422 5011 subs@thewire.co.uk

No stamp needed if mailed in the UK. Payment by credit card, UK Banking cheque, international money order or US dollar cheque

Please send your name and address on the back of your cheque



**WIRE
ADVERTISING**

Contact Andy +44 (0)20 7422 5014
ads@thewire.co.uk

**PSYCHIC
TV
LIVE**

LIMITED EDITION VOLUMES 1-12 IN STORES NOW

www.psychic-tv.co.uk
www.voiceprint.co.uk

SLAM
FREEDOM OF MUSIC

Vladimir Miller, Ken Hyder Counting on Angels

A unique CD unleashing a new music-form straddling Russian classical and contemporary improvised music.

Charlie Collins, John Jasnoch
Need & Desire
(BLA MCD 054)

The first release by one of Britain's longest standing improvising duos.

Mail order: 1 CD £10; 2 or more, £8.50 each, (inc. post)
from: SLAM Productions, 3 Thesiger Road,
Abingdon, OX14 2DX.

Fax/Tel: 01235 529012 • Email: slamprods@aol.com
Full catalogue: www.slamproductions.net
UK Distributors: Cadillac and Impetus.

mysterious female vox on compact disc

[illegible]

*prices in US \$ *overseas postage-\$4+1st cd, \$2 add.
*Ventricle Box19523 Seattle Wa 98109 *ventricle.com



BOOMKAT.COM

REYNOLDS

Superstition (Springhouse)
A Los Angeles author narrates a story of a mysterious fire.
"You have to sit down and read this one by the fire." Reynolds
has written a gripping tale of a woman who is haunted by a fire that
destroyed her home. "It's a very dark, very dark story," Reynolds
says. "It's a very dark story. It's a very dark story. It's a very dark story."
Reynolds, a Los Angeles author, says, "It's a very dark story. It's a very dark story."
Reynolds, a Los Angeles author, says, "It's a very dark story. It's a very dark story."

shit and shine

It's for today or tomorrow. It's for today or tomorrow.

riot season

www.riotseason.com

www.burningshed.com



Exclusive online on-demand recordings:
Bass Communion, Roger Eno, Nick Harris,
Hugh Hopper No-Man, Porcupine Tree,
Rothlis, 21st Century Schizoid Band,
Theo Travis/Mark Hewins and more

Label samplers available for £6

01199911
bMs
0000011

BITMAPSOUNDS

Unreleased + Instrumental + electronic

Thunderdoor - Low life

Sonia Shore

The end of the world

Mutations - Shorelines

All CD's £10.00 + p & p

For more information:

e-mail: info@bitmapsounds.com

Visit us at: www.bitmapsounds.com

Satanicpornocultshop

anorexia gas balloon

2004 February 10th



WWW.SONORE.COM

POSTEVERYTHING.COM

OFFICIAL ONLINE
RETAILER AND INFO
RESOURCE FOR
INDEPENDENT LABELS

THE LEAF LABEL SWIM
PINKFLAG QUATERMASS
AUDIOSPHERE ADAADAT
BETTE PHONO EROTIC
NOT APPLICABLE
PEACE CORPS PROJECTS
STATIC DISCOS AND MORE

POSTEVERYTHING

Type

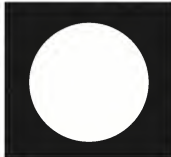
A new UK music label specialising in cinematic, electronic music

Out now
RJ Velaz "Sagittarius" (mini CD/EP)

Out in January
Mikala "Nebula" (mini CD/EP)
Deaf Center "Titan City" (mini CD/EP)

Typecards.com
Free audio samples, mixes and more

Distributed by Disked Goods
disked-goods.com



www.forcedexposure.com

Family Vineyard



Lovely Midget
North Head



Rope
Widow's First Dawn

Grand Ulens "Necro" EP
Loren Connors "Moon Gone Down" 7"
The Blishe Sons "We Walk The Young Earth"
Loren Connors "The Departing of a Dream Pt. II"
Reynolds "Live in Glasnevin 10/24/01" 9-track cart
plus MX-80 San Agustín Unstable Ensemble
Tigersmilk O-Type Darin Gray

www.family-vineyard.com

YaHoWa 13

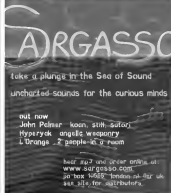
"Penetration
An Aquarian
Symphony"

180 gm vinyl, Ltd edition of 500 copies

Original artwork, contains new liner notes
written especially for this re-release by three
band members

£10.99 inc P&P in UK
(overseas please contact us)

Swordfish,
14 Temple St, Birmingham, B2 5BG
Tel: 0121 633 4859
Email:
swordfishrecords@btconnect.com



take a plunge in the Sea of Sound
uncharted sounds for the curious minds

out now
John Pelisar "koon, stih, sutor"
Hypersk angelic weaponry
L Orangs - 2 people in a room

best mp3 and order online at:
www.sargasso.com
or box 14059, Toronto, ON M6H 3K4
or via the contributors



also add jack recordings
see proof to poster

inner's Seething Pulse

birchville cat motel

cd
\$24.95 / £16 europe
\$18 usa / \$32 rest

stienandpck.com
paypal friendly

or uk + europe [0] 20 4911 7644 / us/ can/ can/ [0] 20 4911 7644
or us + rest [0] 20 4911 7644 / us/ can/ can/ [0] 20 4911 7644
or us + rest [0] 20 4911 7644 / us/ can/ can/ [0] 20 4911 7644

Epiphanies

Ken Hollings recalls how a Martin Denny album given to him by a Savage welcomed him to the jungle



Welcome to the jungle: Martin Denny

Epiphanies ruin everything, all the while leaving everything intact. The world you once knew has now gone for good, yet still it refuses to lie in ruins before you. It is, consequently in the nature of an epiphany to illuminate its subject rather than the other way round, its significance remains reflected at best. I can't imagine anyone wanting to stand for too long in so treacherous a light, but that's probably just me.

I first heard Martin Denny's "Quiet Village" on 29 November 1961 in the front room of Jon Savage's apartment in Manchester. It was a Sunday afternoon. Biting Tongues – the group I was in – had performed live at Refrains the night before and Savage had been in the audience, along with some members of A Certain Ratio. Jon had been impressed enough by the show to invite us over the following day for lunch. That's how my bondmates Graham Massey, Howard Wainfield and I found ourselves perched on various pieces of furniture around the room watching Savage jump from one stack of vinyl to another, pulling out various recordings he wanted us to hear. It was all vintage stuff, mostly original pressings, but presented with the manic hyperkinetic intensity of an arcade coin-op reaching its final level. Jon doesn't play just one track at a time; you get three or four at once. A 45 rpm pressing of Sandy Nelson's "Let There Be Drums" gets yanked off the turntable to make room for "Boss Hoss" by The Sonics, while a muffled cassette recording of an early LaMonte Young performance continues to unwind itself unsteadily in the background.

Then Savage picks up an LP in a damaged cardboard sleeve, held together by a badly scuffed polythene jacket. "Do you or you know this?", he asks. On the front cover a girl stares with eerie, enigmatic pose through the opening in a bead curtain. The teardrop-shaped pendant decorating her brow speaks of strange ports of call, while her red lipstick is pure Fifth Avenue. The word *Exotica* floats calmly above her in thin white capitals. I'm hooked already and I haven't even heard a note yet.

Such casually studied far was of supreme importance back then. We spent a lot of time and energy seeking out things that no longer seemed to fit, that were untouched by familiarity and that had somehow allowed themselves to become displaced

from the surroundings in which they found themselves: *Man From Uncle* paperbacks, *Jackie* annuals, unauthorised Elvis biographies, 1960s pornographic novels, *Mars Attacks!* trading cards.... And yet none of these had prepared me for what I am about to encounter.

First the sound of frogs croaking, then the trilling of some tropical bird: both of them flatteringly artificial, obviously mocked up in the studio. Accompanied by prominent Latin percussion, a piano tinkles and tinkles its way sedately through a melody that will soon become indelibly etched into my memory. And why? Because the tropical bird in the background won't shut up. In fact, it seems to have awakened half the jungle by now and the man responsible for all the wildlife impersonations is busily throwing himself into convulsions. It's not until approximately one minute and 47 seconds into the song that the epiphany takes place. As if to mark some gentle climax in the tune, a vibraphone chimes in unexpectedly, catching me completely off guard. I start laughing hysterically. It is the greatest thing I have ever heard in my life. Across the room Graham's eyes are shining.

"Jon, what is this?"

"Martin Denny. Gen [exits P-Orridge] passed it on to me. Boyd Rice [aka Non] gave it to him when Throbbing Gristle were in San Francisco. Then he found a copy with a better sleeve, so he gave this one to me."

It is traditional, of course, to laugh only when history repeats itself for a second time. When it comes to exotic Easy Listening, as with any modern phenomenon firmly grounded in the false and the artificial, the reverse is nearly always true. The first response is hilarity and only then does the true gravity of the experience manifest itself.

Compared with Les Baxter's original version of "Quiet Village" on his 1951 *Ritual Of The Savage* album, Denny's arrangement is a slow paced, sultry affair. Subsequent renditions recorded over the years, including that on his 1969 *Exotic Moog* album, are slower and suttler still. It's the first, however, laid down in mono at Webber Edwards's Honolulu studio at the end of Denny's residency at the Shell Bar in Henry J Kaiser's Hawaiian Village hotel complex in

1956, which remains the cultural lodestone. A work of tranquil alien beauty, all of pop's stale orthodoxes stand exposed in its presence. Luxurious, irrational and counterfeited, it challenges you to hear things in quite the same way ever again.

Once your perceptions shift, however, they cannot go back to the way they once were. That's also in the nature of an epiphany. From that moment on, Graham Massey and I started collecting Martin Denny recordings with a fanaticism that scares me to this day. We dug through sale racks and secondhand bins, swapped parts of rantes, sat up late into the night studying sleeve notes and comparing recording details. August Colón, the majestically named South American percussionist responsible for the exotic bedrums and related sound effects, became a hero of mythological dimensions to us. Pretty soon we were also buying anything we could find by Les Baxter and former Denny sideman Arthur Lyman, who had played the vibes on the earliest versions of "Quiet Village".

Then came Mill Raskin, Tak Shindo, Felix Slatkin, Nelson Riddle, Esquivel, Yma Sumac, Les Clark, the Randy Van Horn Singers... and if anyone is prepared to make me a copy of *Fair And Warner*, the LP brought out by 'Exotica girl' Sandy Warner, the model on the covers of the first few Denny releases, then I want to hear from you.

Except such listening pleasures no longer seem as removed from their surroundings as they did back in early 1960s. A large part of Techno is, after all, the continuation of exotica in another form. Graham made their connection quite plain by the decade's end in his work with 808 State. Listen again to "Pacific State" or just about any other track on *Annet*, and you'll see what I mean.

Shortly after my first exposure to "Quiet Village", Savage and I meet by chance on a crowded London street. Christmas is only a few days away. "I'm glad we ran into each other," he says. "It'll save me the bother of mailing this to you." Then he hands me the copy of *Exotica* in the damaged sleeve, still in its protective polythene jacket. "I found one in better condition a few days ago," he says. "And you seemed to enjoy it so much. I thought you might like to have it. Merry Christmas."

Thanks, Jon. ☐

The Wire T-shirt 2004



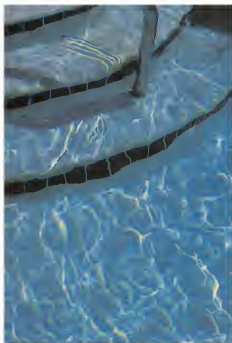
The standard T-shirt v.2

A black T-shirt with *The Wire* logo printed in blue across the front.
Unlimited edition

The Wire T-shirt comes in two versions: a standard black shirt printed with *The Wire* logo; plus a series of limited edition shirts featuring specially commissioned designs by a variety of underground artists and musicians. To date we have commissioned designs from Savage Pencil, Henri Chopin, Kim Hiorthey and Mike Kelley, all of which were printed in limited

runs of 100 shirts each (and all of which are now sold out). This month we usher in the New Year with a new version of the standard shirt (with a blue rather than grey logo), while next month we will continue our series of limited edition shirts with a new design by Non-Format. For details of prices, sizes and how to order the 2004 standard shirt, turn to page 101

SOUL JAZZ RECORDS



Arthur Russell

THE
WORLD
OF
ARTHUR
RUSSELL

Soul Jazz Records

THE WORLD OF ARTHUR RUSSELL

FEATURING: DINOSAUR L "Go Bang"/LOLA "Wax The Van"/LOOSE JOINTS "Is It All Over My Face"/
ARTHUR RUSSELL "Keeping Up"/ARTHUR RUSSELL "In The Light Of Th Miracle"/ARTHUR RUSSELL "A Little Lost" /
LOOSE JOINTS "Pop Your Funk"/ARTHUR RUSSELL "Let's Go Swimming"/DINOSAUR L "In The Cornbelt" /
ARTHUR RUSSELL "Treehouse"/INDIAN OCEAN "Schoolbell/Treehouse"

Release Date: January 26th, 2004

ALSO COMING IN JAN/FEB 2004

A Certain Ratio "The Graveyard and The Ballroom",
Hu Vibrational (new Deep Jazz from Los Angeles), **Bell** "Black Helicopters",
Sin Palabras (new on Yoruba Records), **Studio One Ska**